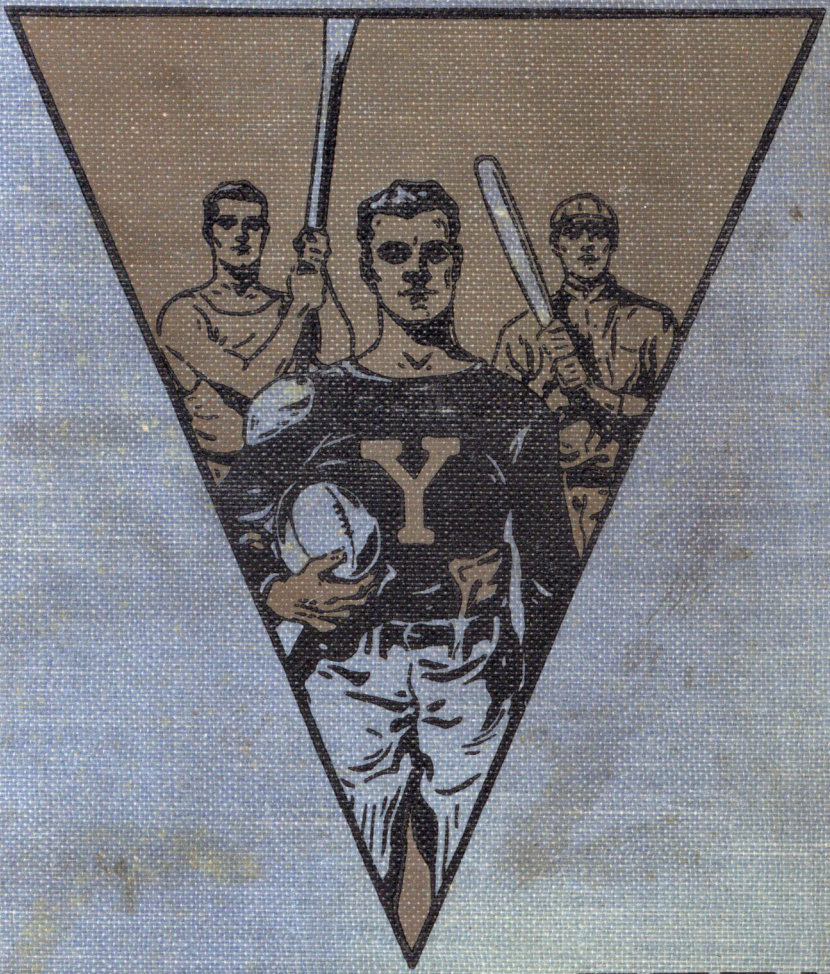
Boltwood of Yale



GILBERT PATTEN

BOLTWOOD OF YALE

HERBERT
KRUEGER

A SOLID, SQUARE-JAWED MAN . . . . . WAS STRIDING STRAIGHT TOWARD ROGER. IT WAS HENRY BOLTWOOD.

Frontispiece (*Page 299*)

BOLTWOOD OF YALE

BY

GILBERT PATTEN
Author of "The College Rebel," etc.

ILLUSTRATED

PUBLISHERS
BARSE & HOPKINS
NEW YORK, N. Y. NEWARK, N. J.

BOOKS FOR YOUNG MEN

THE COLLEGE LIFE SERIES

By Gilbert Patten

12mo. Cloth. Illustrated. Price per volume,

BOLTWOOD OF YALE
THE COLLEGE REBEL
ON COLLEGE BATTLEFIELDS

(Other volumes in preparation)

BARSE & HOPKINS

PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

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Boltwood of Yale

Printed in U. S. A.

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BOLTWOOD OF YALE

CHAPTER I

CAST OFF

HENRY BOLTWOOD gave his unlighted cigar a roll into the corner of his mouth, and set his square teeth on the weed with a viselike clamp that caused the hard muscles of his jaw to stand out like the sinews of a blacksmith. His bushy eyebrows, lowered by a scowl of impatience, almost hid a pair of eyes gleaming beneath them as heat lightning glows through a slit in a horizon cloud.

"The worthless cub!" he muttered, in a voice resembling the low rumble of distant thunder. "I sent for him ten minutes ago. Well, it's the last time he'll keep me waiting."

The jaw relaxed to let the mutilated cigar squirm, then clamped down on it harder than before. The watch plumped back into the pocket of the ample waistcoat, and Boltwood resumed his heavy striding up and down the oak-paneled library.

There was a light, firm step in the hall, and a clean-limbed, square-shouldered young fellow en-

tered deliberately. That the two were father and son the similarity of many physical features indicated; but the younger, while possessing much of the sturdy robustness of the elder, was taller, and had not yet acquired any of the grossness cast upon his father by passing years and indulgence in an appetite that would not be denied the good things of life. Several strips of court-plaster "decorated" his face. His eyes were slightly bloodshotten. He was in evening dress, with a Tuxedo jacket.

"Well, father?" he said.

Henry Boltwood had paused beside a table on which lay a litter of papers. The outspread fingers of his square hand rested firmly on one of those papers, and he surveyed his son with a stony expression that did not in the least mask the fires slumbering beneath, like those hidden by the smoking crust of a volcano. The ticking of the French clock on the carved mantel sounded through the silence like blows of a hammer. Young Boltwood felt the tension in the air, and his fine figure stiffened slightly, while a slow flush mounted to his face.

The older man spoke, and his voice was harsh and jarring: "You took your time about coming."

"I took time to finish dressing. I'm going out to dinner and the theater, and I expect some friends to call for me in a short time."

"You took your time," repeated Henry Boltwood, his voice unchanged. "You have a way of doing that whenever I want anything of you, and now I'm going to give you your time—the whole of it."

Roger Boltwood started the least bit, and on his jaw the muscles whipped out in a manner faintly resembling the hardening of those more pronounced muscles upon the jaw of his father.

"I don't think I get you, governor," he said.

"Don't you? Well, you'll get me before I'm through, and get me straight! You know there's a last straw that always proves too much for the camel's back. I'm the camel. The straw was your rowdyish escapade in Jersey last night. I presume you've seen the newspaper stories—flaring headlines and all? 'Joy riders have narrow escape. Young Boltwood smashed another car on the Trenton turnpike. Said to be speeding a mile a minute near Bound Brook when the machine left the road, jumped the ditch, struck a tree, and was totally wrecked.' Every report agrees that you and your carousing companions escaped death by a miracle. Well, sir, what have you to say?"

"I quite agree with the reports; it was a close call," admitted the son. "But I have an excuse. I was racing with a 'Keating Kar.' I couldn't let a Keating pass me, governor."

"Excuse!" exploded Henry Boltwood. "Excuse! What excuse have you for taking out my private touring car after being expressly forbidden by me to touch it?"

"That was some time ago, after I had that unlucky accident with the roadster, governor. You haven't said anything to me about it lately."

The blood rushed into Henry Boltwood's face until it turned fairly purple. The cords on his thick neck stood forth.

"Experience should have taught you that when I say a thing I mean it for all time. You came near breaking your neck, and it might have been a good thing for you—and for me—if you had!" he growled in unreasoning anger.

"Father!"

"I have said what I mean," rasped Henry Boltwood, suddenly clenching his fist and bringing it down on the table with a thump that made the litter of papers shiver. "If last night's escapade were all, or even a small part, of your reckless, disreputable, rowdyish doings, I might have an inclination to leniency. But that was merely the culmination of two years of similar Cain raising. Ever since your mother died, ever since you broke loose from home and went away to college, you've been hitting a pace that has steadily grown faster and faster. I'm a busy man, and my business won't permit me to stand

watch over my son, as if he were an incompetent, an imbecile, or a creature to be guarded night and day. I've talked to you twenty times. I've warned you what was coming to you unless you let up and cut out this hitting it up.

"Why, at Yale," he went on, "you're called a high roller. I know, for I've had your college record looked into. You travel with a set of bloods; that's what they call themselves—bloods. I've always furnished you with a liberal allowance, more than enough to pay all your bills and keep you supplied with a pocketful of ready cash.

"Look there!" he suddenly exclaimed, pointing at the litter on the table. "Those are bills—bills of yours sent me to pay. I've dug them all out and added them up. In two years sixty-eight hundred dollars! Sixty-eight hundred dollars over and above your allowance, which should have carried you through like a gentleman. Your mother wanted you to have a college education. I wanted you to have one. I never had that advantage, but I was more than willing that you should. This is how you have repaid me."

Like one overweighted by the increasing load of accusations, Roger Boltwood stepped forward a pace or two, and sank upon the broad arm of a leather-covered chair.

"Dad," he said, "I admit—"

"Oh, yes, you admit! You're great on admit-

ting and promising, but you've never kept a single promise to me, and you never will. Even worse than these unpaid bills is the fact that you fizzled in your sophomore year. You failed to pass. How could you pass when you were spending your time whooping it up instead of studying? This fall you should return to Yale a junior. If you were going back you'd have to put in another year as a sophomore."

"If I should go back? I *am* going back!"

For the first time Henry Boltwood laughed, but the sound was not pleasant to hear.

"Are you?" he inquired sarcastically. "Perhaps you are, but I have my doubts."

"You don't mean to take me out of college, dad? You can't mean that!"

"No, I don't mean to take you out. I'm not going to have anything to do with it. I have tested you, Roger, and found you wanting. I have pleaded with you, and you have ignored my pleading. Your actions have become notorious. You have disgraced me. I have made up my mind, and when I do that nothing can change it. When I read the wretched story in the newspapers I made up my mind then and there—instantly. In four days you will be twenty-one—your own man. In four days I'll cease to have any right of authority over you. I really ceased to have authority over you two years ago. I'm

going to put you to the test. I started life for myself at thirteen. I began work on a dollar and seventy-five cents a week—and lived. I didn't have a college education either. I'll give you a better chance than that. I'll give you a job in the factory of the Comet Motor Car Company at six dollars a week. The fact that you're my son will make absolutely no difference in the way you are treated. You'll begin just the same as if you were a stranger. You can live on six dollars a week, and if you—"

Roger Boltwood had risen to his feet, and now, standing very straight, with his heels together, he put up a protesting hand.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said; "let me get this straight. Do I understand that you are casting me off? Do I understand that you are turning me out of your home to begin life as a laborer? Is that it?"

"That's precisely it," replied Henry Boltwood.

CHAPTER II

LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

THE younger man's face was white, making the patches of courtplaster stand out prominently. His hands were clenched at his sides, and his eyes were fastened steadily on the flinty countenance of his inexorable father. Again in the tense silence the ticking of the clock sounded painfully loud. Presently Roger unclasped one of his hands, and passed it across his forehead, brushing back a damp lock of dark-brown hair. Something like a smile, eloquent of scorn, curled his full, firm lips.

"As I know you never joke," he said presently, in a husky voice, "I won't delude myself into the belief that you're jesting now. I acknowledge that I may not always have done the right thing, but perhaps the blame is not altogether mine. Perhaps—"

Again Henry Boltwood smashed his big fist down upon the oak table. "Don't you have the impertinence to insinuate that I am in any way to blame for your high jinks and your failure to pass at college," he roared. "Show that you've got a bit of real man in you, and shoulder your

own load. You'll have to shoulder it, for I'm done."

"Do you think, father, that you have ever shouldered many of my loads—barring, of course, the financial ones? A little while ago you said you had been a busy man: you have; you are. You started at thirteen for yourself, and you've won your way until to-day you're rich, and the president of one of the big automobile companies of America. You were so busy making money and climbing up in the world that, as long as I can remember, you never had much time for your home and your family. I know my mother felt it. You gave her everything she wanted except yourself."

"Look here! Don't you have the nerve to—"

"I'm going to say what I started to say, father. I won't try to make any excuses for myself further than to assert that I have never known what it was to have a sympathetic, affectionate father who was genuinely interested in me, and to whom I could come for advice when I found myself in wrong. I know fellows whose fathers are like chums to them. Has there ever been anything like chumminess between us? Have I ever been able to approach you to ask advice? Have you really cared a rap how I spent my time as long as I failed to give you annoyance or saved your pride by avoiding escapades which might dis-

grace you? Have you ever once visited me in my two years at college? With my home less than a hundred miles away from the college I attend, my father has never found time to—"

"Stop!" roared the older man, his face again purple and apoplectic. "Not another word out of you! If you have the insolence to say one more word of this sort I'll turn you out without as much as a six-dollar-a-week job to keep you from starving!"

It was the younger man's turn to laugh. "Do you think I'm going to take your six-dollar job, governor?" he asked scornfully. "Do you think I'm going to give up my college career and begin as a workman in your factory? If you do, you're very much mistaken."

"Huh! You'll give up your college career, all right, and if you don't take what I offer you you may have to work for less for somebody else."

"That's all right. I can do that if necessary."

"Then do it!" almost shouted Henry Boltwood, suddenly lifting both fists, and striking out with a deciding gesture. "Let's see you try it! It will do you good. You'll go one way or the other —down or up. I'll bet within a month you'll be begging me for that six-dollar job."

"Not in a month, dad; not in a year; not in a thousand years! I'll never beg anything of you. You boast that you never change your mind when

it's made up. Well, I'm your son! Perhaps I've got a little of my mother in me, but I've got enough of you to be just as stubborn as you are. I'm going to finish my course at Yale. Don't laugh. Don't sneer. I don't know how I'll do it, but if I live I'll do it. I'll get there, father!"

For a moment it seemed that something like a touch of admiration passed over Henry Boltwood's face. It was followed, however, by doubt and total disbelief.

"You don't know what you're talking about," he declared. "How do you think you're going to work it, let me ask? You, the son of Henry Boltwood, have lived in a suite in Liberty Hall. You've patronized the most expensive tailors. You've got clothes enough to fit out Beau Brummel in his swellest days. You've had a motor car, too—a motor car to sport in with your gay friends whenever you chose. You've lived like a prince. In four days you'll be of age without a dollar to your name. How are you going back to Yale, broke, and with no one to pay your bills? Why, even if you had enough to scrape along on, like the average student, you couldn't do it. You wouldn't take a single room in a poor dormitory, and live at cheap hash joints. What would your fine, high-flying friends think of it? How would they treat you? They'd cut you out. They'd sneer at you. The only associates you'd have

would be poverty-stricken chaps like yourself, and I've never noticed that you were much interested in that kind."

"I've never had to be, father, but all the same I've sometimes thought there were better men in that class than the most of the men in the set I ran with."

"Ho! Fine talk! Sounds like a little passage from a novel! A week or two of shifting for yourself will knock all these fancy ideas out of your noddle."

Roger seated himself once more on the arm of the chair, and gazed intently downward at the design of the magnificent Bokhara carpet. The straight, vertical furrow between his eyes betrayed thought that was tinged with perplexity. The older man caught this, and fancied his son was yielding.

"Come, Roger," he said; "I've decided, and—"

"So have I." Roger threw up his head and met his father's eyes squarely. "I presume you'll let me take my personal property out of the house? How long do I have in which to remove it?"

Henry Boltwood was not staggered, but for the moment he was stricken dumb. Then for the third time the purple tide of anger darkened his face.

"I'll give you twenty-four hours," he said; "and you can take everything you think rightfully belongs to you. Is that time enough?"

"Quite enough," said Roger quietly. "Thank you, sir." He turned towards the door.

"Wait a minute," ordered his father, and the son halted and half turned in the doorway. "In four days you're of age. I shall permit you to have an allowance of one hundred dollars—twenty-five dollars a day for the remaining time that you are a minor. I shall pay no bills of your contracting after this present date. Will you take the one hundred now?"

"Your generosity overwhelms me," returned the son, with a touch of bitter sarcasm which he almost instantly regretted. "You have been generous in the past, father; I'm not denying that. But as long as we're going to dissolve partnership in this manner, and I happen to have some money left in my pocket now, I don't think I'll put myself in your debt any further. And you needn't worry about any bills I may contract; they won't be sent to you for collection. Good night."

For a full minute after Roger had disappeared Henry Boltwood stood there, his teeth meeting in the end of the dead cigar. Suddenly he yanked the weed from his lips, and flung it fiercely into the open grate.

"I'll be blowed if I thought he'd take it like that!" he growled. "But it's only a flash in the pan. He don't know what it is to get up against the world, and it will take the starch out of him blamed sudden when he has the experience. I reckon I've done the proper thing. It was necessary, and it will either make or break him."

Having ascended to his rooms on the floor above, Roger paused a moment to survey his surroundings. They were pleasant rooms, richly furnished, comfortable, and homelike. Nevertheless, for some reason which he now vaguely began to understand, they had never seemed like home to him. He was certain, likewise, that this fine estate of Soundhurst, purchased by his father four years ago, with all its magnificence, had failed to satisfy his mother's craving for a real home. Two hundred thousand dollars was said to be the price Henry Boltwood had paid for the estate, and many a man has paid more and found he did not have a "home," after all.

Roger walked slowly to the mantel, above which was a portrait of his mother, and for some time he stood looking fixedly at the picture.

"I think," he finally said, "if she had lived I might have done differently. I've spilled the milk, all right, but I'm not going to whimper. I don't suppose the governor ever sowed any wild oats, and perhaps I've been scattering a crop for

both of us. Perhaps I've got most of them planted by this time. Anyhow, it seems that harvest time has come, and I'm getting the early returns."

He paced the floor for a few minutes, and presently took a cigarette from a silver tray on a table, and lighted it.

"I wonder just what I'll do?" he speculated. "I told the governor I was going back to Yale, but how the dickens am I going to make it without a dollar to my name? There are some fellows in college who are working their way through, but hanged if I understand how they can do it. It's a dead sure thing I can't tutor, and I don't know what else I'm fitted for. I might pawn a lot of stuff, and raise a few hundred dollars, but that wouldn't carry me very far, and I'd be up against it when the little pot was gone."

He was not foolish enough to base even the faintest hope on the possibility that Henry Boltwood would relent. He told himself that there was no such possibility. And while he was still pacing the floor in perplexity the butler came and announced that friends were calling for him.

"Oh, yes!" said Roger. "I'd forgotten them. Won't you get my topcoat and hat, John?"

The required articles were promptly brought, and Roger slipped into the coat. Putting on his hat, he took a survey of himself in the mirror,

and saw, despite the patches of court-plaster, a clean-looking handsome young fellow with an air of limitless prosperity.

"You don't look quite like a down-and-outer with a six-dollar-a-week job standing between you and starvation," he murmured whimsically. Then he turned to the butler, who was respectfully waiting near the door. "John," he said, "I shall have a couple of men here in the morning to pack my things. I'm going to move out."

"Going to move out, Mr. Roger!" exclaimed the butler, with a touch of curiosity he could not wholly repress.

"Yes, going to quit for good. I'm coming of age in a few days, you know, and my father and I have decided to dissolve partnership. I'm to take all my personal belongings, and I'll need a little of your help. Without you I might overlook some things."

"I'm very sorry, Mr. Roger—"

"Well, I'm sorry, too, in some ways; in others I'm not feeling so bad—yet. It's just a little jolt in the wind, John, but I don't propose to take the count. Look for me around nine-thirty in the morning. I haven't been getting up very early lately, but I'll make an exception to-morrow."

The butler followed him downstairs and opened the door. The moment Roger stepped outside three young men waiting in a big touring car

under the porte-cochère hailed him somewhat boisterously. The shadows of approaching evening, late in August, were beginning to rise from the lowlands, and a purplish haze clouded the distant waters of the Sound.

"Come on, Bolt, old slow coach!" cried one of the chaps in the tonneau. "We've got a big night ahead of us, and we want to have dinner early at the Mammoth."

Immediately another one—a little fellow with blue eyes and a tenor voice—began to sing:

"It looks to me like a big night to-night,
Big night to-night,
Big night to-night;
The old cat's away and the mice want to play,
For it looks like a big night to-night."

"Shut up, Toddy!" ordered the first speaker. "Don't disgrace Bolt on his native heath."

"Wow!" whooped the little chap. "Disgrace him! Oh, say, that's good! That's funny! As if any one could!"

Frowning, Roger got into the car. "Go ahead," he said to the chauffeur. The automobile rolled away, with the fellow called Todd again singing: "It looks to me like a big night to-night!"

CHAPTER III

GILDED YOUTHS

"LET'S make it the grillroom," suggested Jack Dolliver, as the quartet left the car at the side entrance of the Mammoth. "Just as good people feed there as in the main dining room, and Suggs isn't wearing his moonlights."

"Why don't you get some real glad rags, Suggsy, old punch-'em-stiff?" prattled Todd. "They say you raked down five thousand bones when you put Walloping Kerrigan out in the fifth round. What are you doing with your coin, you old miser?"

"I'm saving it to buy an umbrella," answered the one called Suggs, who had the bulldog jaw, thick neck, and various other physical characteristics of a professional athlete.

"An umbrella!" squealed Todd. "An umbrella! What do you want of an umbrella?"

"Got to have something for a rainy day, you know," returned Suggs out of the corner of his mouth, at the same time winking at Boltwood.

Todd cackled. "Why, you're a real joker, aren't you? All right, Dolly, the grill suits me. It's more sporty than the other room, anyhow. What say, Bolt?"

"Anything suits me to-night," answered Roger, in a tone and manner of strangely mingled recklessness and gloom.

Dolliver gave him a slap on the back. "Brace up, old chap!" he urged. "You're wearing a face like a funeral. Don't feel so bad over that little smash last night. You weren't hurt any worse than I. My knee was twisted, and I'll limp for a week. Busting your old man's car didn't amount to anything. He turns 'em out right and left at his factory, and he'll give you another one to smash as soon as he forgets this little accident."

Smiling ironically, but making no reply, Boltwood followed the limping Dolliver through the revolving door, Todd, still chattering, treading on his heels, while Suggs brought up the rear. They passed the long desk, weaving their way through the usual throng that almost blocked the way, Dolliver nodding somewhat coldly to a pair of overdressed fellows who bowed and beamed upon him. As they moved on toward the coat checker's stand, Boltwood caught a few words which drifted to his ears from the lips of one of the overcordial pair:

"Jack Dolliver, the broker's son. Rotten with money. That's Rog Boltwood with him—the big chap. Hot stuff. A high roller——"

Boltwood felt his cheeks burning suddenly. It was not by any means the first time he had heard himself called a high roller, but for the first time the appellation brought him a sense of resentment that was tinged with shame.

The head waiter of the grillroom received them with a deferential bow and a smile, recognizing Dolliver and Boltwood, which is fame, indeed, for a certain class of would-be gay young bloods in New York.

Todd, who had not been recognized, slapped the waiter on the back, somewhat to that worthy's annoyance, and gurgled:

"Evening, George, old man! You know the sort of table we want—not too near the music, but where we can watch all the animals feed without rubbering our necks off."

"This way, gentlemen," said the waiter, with dignity.

They followed him to a table which was really one of the best in the room if they wished to get a good view of everything around them; but barely had they seated themselves when Todd began to kick.

"Look where he's put us!" he complained. "Here in the midst of a lot of yaps, and right over

there is an empty table, with three chickens and only one lonesome male, regaling themselves at the adjoining festal board. Gee, Dolly! Look a' the one with the picture hat and the gilded coiffure! I've seen her somewhere before. Me for her! I like the tall and stately fillies."

"Shut up, Todd! You make me sick!" growled Boltwood.

"That's Fay Merrifield, of the Hunter's Moon company," said Dolliver, catching the eye of the young woman in question and getting a nod and a smile in return for his bow of recognition. "Of course you've seen her, Toddy?"

"And you know her?" bubbled Todd. "Oh, you rascal! You know 'em all. You've got to introduce me. You've got to find an excuse to knock me down to her."

"If you don't shut up," said Boltwood, "I'll consider that I have an excuse to knock you down in a literal sense."

"Aw, what's eating you to-night?" retorted Todd. "You're off your feed. Never knew you to have such a grouch. What you need is a couple of big drinks."

Dolliver ordered four cocktails, and the waiter departed. While they were waiting, Todd produced his cigarette case and passed it round. Besides Todd, Dolliver was the only one who took a cigarette.

"No," said Roger; "I don't like the things to-night."

"They're no good any time," asserted Suggs. "They knock a guy's wind."

"That's right," agreed Boltwood. "I've noticed something is getting my wind. I am as hard as nails, but I blow a little now if I overexert."

"Don't overexert," chuckled Todd, "that's the answer. What's the use when a fellow don't have to?"

"If I'd gone in for athletics at college," said Boltwood, "I'd never touched cigarettes. I did pitch for the freshman team, you know, and the varsity coach had a good word for me. Thought of playing football, too, but I quit after going out a couple of times for practice."

"I don't know what you was as a pitcher," said Suggs, "but by your build I'd say you ought to make good as a football player."

"Why should he do those things?" jeered Todd. "There's enough dubs ready to let themselves be pounded up without a real sport going in for football and baseball."

"I'm sorry now," said Boltwood, "that I didn't make a try for the eleven or the nine; but it's too late."

"Too late?" queried Dolliver, with lifted eyebrows. "Why too late? You've got two more

years—no, three more," he corrected, recalling the fact that Roger had failed to pass in his sophomore year. "But, then, if you went in for athletics you'd have to cut out the gay stuff and live like a monk. You'd never do that—never."

"Never!" echoed Todd. "You ain't built that way, Bolt. By the way, did your old man raise much of a holler over the little racket last night?"

"He did," answered Roger tersely.

Todd almost choked with laughter. "Oh, these fathers!" he chortled. "These old-fashioned, antiquated fathers! They take it hard when we have a little real up-to-date sport. They don't know it, but they're dead ones."

"Last night," said Boltwood, regarding the overvoluble little chap with a touch of contempt that he could not disguise, "after we smashed into that tree, I found you sitting in the ditch and crying like a baby. And you weren't even scratched."

"Oh," stammered Todd, "I—I was—crying for joy. You know anybody can be so happy that laughing won't relieve his feelings; he has to cry. Here's the cocktails, and, oh, la, la! I'm some dry."

Dolliver promptly ordered the first course, after which he lifted his glass.

"Here's to us," he said. "A short life and a merry one; a big drink and another one. Bottoms up!"

With the exception of Boltwood, they drained their glasses. Barely touching his lips to the liquid, Roger put it down practically untasted.

CHAPTER IV

ONE REAL MAN

THEY had reached the entrées. The wine was brought in a cooler, opened, and the glasses filled before Dolliver discovered that Roger's cocktail remained in his glass.

"Why, what ails you, old man?" he exclaimed. "You haven't taken your appetizer."

"I think I have appetite enough without it, Jack. I'm going to cut out the stuff to-night."

"Oh, come, that won't do," expostulated Todd. "You need something to cheer you up. Ain't going to drink to-night? Ridiculous! Why, we're going to see 'The Gay Widow' after dinner, and we've got three lulus of the chorus scheduled for a little ride and a supper out at the Coney Club. It's Mabelle, the little dancer, for yours, and she's some lively girl, believe me!"

"I think I'll cut it out," said Roger, "Suggs can take my place."

"Nix!" said the pugilist. "Can't do it. I'm dated to second Young Dugan in the go at the Harlem Y. M. A. A. to-night. Take it from me, he'll put Mike Hennessy to the mat inside the limit. If you fellows want to make a dollar, cut

out the Flossies and come with me. Put your coin on Young Dugan, and get in right on a real killing."

"That would be more to my relish," said Roger, his jaw hardening a bit.

"Oh, yes," scoffed Todd. "If you'd had to do it, you'd made a first-class pug yourself. Tom Keating can attest to that."

"Speak about—angels!" murmured Dolliver, gazing at a party of four just sitting down at a table a short distance away. "There's Keat now, with Charley Randall."

"Who are the demure daisies they're with?" asked Todd eagerly. "The tall one is pretty fine."

"She isn't a patch to the other one—Keating's sister," declared Dolliver.

Roger made no comment, but, like Dolliver, he had eyes for only one of the two girls, who unquestionably was extremely attractive, with an oval face, dark-brown hair, fine eyes, and a healthy, natural coloring that was not too pronounced. The extreme modesty of her evening gown, while it contrasted strongly with the raiment of many of the women at surrounding tables, in some way gave her a superior air that made her appear—to the eyes of Boltwood, at least—of a much finer nature.

"I believe," said Dolliver, in a low tone, speak-

ing to Roger, "that you and Keat haven't been on particularly friendly terms since that little bout over a poker game?"

"That was as pretty a piece of sparring as I ever watched," asserted Todd. "One time I thought he was going to do you, Bolt."

"He would have," said Roger, "if I'd let him. When I saw that he really meant to make it a knock-out I had to get in and take care of myself."

"And, oh, you sure did put him out proper! Just one wallop on the point of the jaw settled his hash. He shook hands afterward, didn't he?"

"In a way, he did, but I know he's always had it in for me just the same."

"Kind of odd," said Dolliver, "that you and Keating should be enemies, while your old man and his are fierce rivals in business. I understand old Cy Keating is banking everything on the Keating Kar beating the Comet in the Traymore Cup Race. What's your opinion on that point, Rog?"

"I haven't one. The two cars are as near matched as two cars can be, and a great deal will depend on luck—and the driver. If Keating has the better driver he'll win, barring accidents."

"It's us to see that race," put in Todd. "We've planned it long enough ahead. You've got everything arranged, of course, Bolt?"

"Well, I thought I had everything arranged

yesterday, for the governor has certain parking privileges, and I counted on going down in one of our cars. Now—"

"Now?" breathed the little chap.

"It's all off, boys. There's nothing doing. I won't get the use of a car, and if I see the race it will be from one of the stands or some position alongside the course."

"Oh, ding!" exploded Todd. "Is that right? You don't mean to say your old man is going to be such a sorehead that he will—"

"He has," interrupted Roger.

At this moment Tom Keating, chancing to look across, recognized them, and bowed pleasantly to Dolliver. He bowed likewise to Roger, but there was a sudden chill in his manner. His sister, observing him, turned her head the least bit, and her wide-set brown eyes looked straight into the eyes of Roger Boltwood. Ere she turned away her cheeks had taken on a strangely significant glow. Her brother, after speaking to her earnestly, rose and approached the other table.

"Don't rise," he said. "Thought I'd step over and say hello. Good evening, Boltwood. I understand your father has stated that it's practically a sure thing the Comet will beat the Keating Kar. Of course you hold the same opinion, and if you'd like to make a little wager on it, I'll—"

"Please excuse me, Keating," interrupted Roger. "I have no intention of making a bet on that race."

Keating's lips curled in an irritating smile. "Haven't lost your nerve, have you? Why, you're always ready to bet on any old thing. I don't quite understand—"

"I know you don't understand, Keating, and I hope you'll pardon me if I don't explain."

"Well, I certainly didn't think it of you! What will they say at New Haven when they hear—"

Again Roger interrupted: "It makes absolutely no difference to me what they say, Keating. I shall not bet on that race. I doubt if I even attend it."

"Well, that seems to me pretty good evidence that we've got the Comet people shaking in the knees. There's a lot of bluff about them, but perhaps that is not remarkable, considering that—"

"I wouldn't say it, Keating; I really wouldn't."

There was something in young Boltwood's cold, hard voice, something in his suddenly narrowed eyes and the tenseness of his face, which stopped Tom Keating effectually.

"Why, you can't even take a little joshing, can you?" he said. "Your smash last night seems to have got your nerve. Well, I must go back. So long, fellows."

Roger's eyes bored into the small of Keating's

back as the latter returned to his companions. He continued to sit thus until Dolliver touched him on the arm.

"What's up, Rog?" he questioned. "Something's gone wrong. Tell us about it. Tell us everything."

"All right," said Roger; "I'll give you the straight, cold facts. I'll tell you just what's happened and just where I stand."

This he proceeded to do in a very few words, without the slightest attempt to conceal anything. His companions listened in surprise, which swiftly changed to amazement and a touch of incredulous dismay.

"Why, great Cæsar, Bolt, old man!" spluttered Todd. "You can't mean to say you've been disowned? Your old man hasn't kicked you out into the cold, cruel world, penniless and destitute?"

"Perhaps not disowned," said Roger, "but he's certainly turned me out to shift for myself."

"Without an allowance of any sort—and he as rich as mud!" cried the little chap. "Why, it's outrageous! It's brutal! It's absolutely criminal!"

"Perhaps he doesn't really mean it, Boltwood," said Dolliver hopefully. "Perhaps he's just testing you."

"You don't know my father, Jack. When he

does a thing like this he means it. There's no question about that. I'm the goat, and it's up to me to dodge the almshouse and the bread line."

"Well, I agree with Todd that it's rotten!" exploded Dolliver. "A father who would do such a thing ought to be shot!"

"Stop a moment, Dolly!" cut in Roger sharply. "Don't forget that—whatever he has done—he's my father. Perhaps he's not wholly to blame. I've been something of a mucker; I realize that."

"Oh, piffle!" scoffed Todd. "What have you done more than any fellow in your circumstances would have done? A chap has got to live in these days. He's got to keep up with the times."

"It's a dead sure thing," said Roger, with a faint smile, "that I've never allowed the times, or anything else, to leave me behind."

"Say, old sport," put in Suggs, with a touch of genuine sympathy, "I reckon this deal is going to be pretty rough on you. Your old gent has handed you a wallop that's put you groggy."

"Yes," admitted Roger, "he's got me hanging on to the ropes; but I'm not down and out yet by any means."

"Then you think," said Dolliver, with a slight touch of eagerness, "that he will finally relent, after all?"

"I'm not counting on anything of the sort. I thought I'd made that plain enough. Whatever

I get from this time onward I'll have to get myself, with none of his assistance."

"Murder!" exclaimed Todd, as if just beginning to realize the full extent of the calamity that had befallen Boltwood. "Why, you'll have to give up college! You'll have to give up everything. You'll have to—*work!* I say, Rog, perhaps you're not out, but you're certainly down, and the timer's holding the watch on you."

"This is only the first round. The bout has just begun," said Roger resolutely.

Dolliver shook his head. "It's all right for you to talk that way, Boltwood, but I see your finish. You're out of college; you're out of everything. I guess you were right in calling our plans off for to-night. Excuse me; I forgot something I wanted to tell Keating."

With that he rose, left the table, and joined Tom Keating and his friends, bowing cordially to the girls when introduced, and shaking hands with Randall. Young Keating instructed the waiter to bring up a chair, and Dolliver sat down.

With narrowed eyes, a grim face, and a faint smile of bitter understanding, Roger Boltwood watched the movements of his late companion. Even when the dessert was brought, Dolliver did not return. Laughing and talking in the most friendly fashion, he seemed much absorbed by the company he had sought, and once Roger was sure

he told them something of the frank confession to which he had recently listened; for Keating suddenly grew so hilarious that his sister was forced to suppress him. And Roger was sure that the girl cast a momentary glance in his direction with something like pity in her kindly brown eyes.

Pity! That hit him hard. Afterward he kept his eyes averted. He was not even aware when Toby Todd made some puerile excuse and drifted away. After a time he noticed that he had been left alone with Suggs—Suggs, the pug! Then he spoke to the waiter, and called for the check, even though the dinner had been at Dolliver's invitation.

"It's all fixed, sir," said the waiter. "Mr. Dolliver has signed the check already."

Dolliver had signed it without returning, and it was plain that he did not mean to return. Roger's lips parted to emit a low laugh, which his set teeth half smothered.

He drank his small cup of black coffee, but left the dessert practically untasted.

"I'm going, Suggs," he said, rising.

"Me, too," said the boxer. "I've got to beat it up to Harlem"

With his topcoat over his arm, Roger walked out of the hotel into the open air, and paused, undecided, upon the sidewalk. Then Suggs, still following, put a hand on his shoulder.

"I say, it's tough, old boy," growled the man. "It's a punch below the belt. Say, if you're broke, I got some money, and I'll lend yer fifty."

"Thanks, Suggs," said Roger, a sudden lump in his throat as he grasped the man's hand. "I'm not down to bed rock—yet. You're one real man, anyway."

CHAPTER V

COULD HE COME BACK?

TRUE to his word, Roger arrived at Soundhurst the following forenoon with a dray and two men to assist him in the work of packing and moving his belongings. As usual, his father had left nearly an hour before for his office, a fact which gave the outcast considerable satisfaction, as he thus avoided another unpleasant meeting. The butler, looking melancholy and regretful, admitted young Boltwood and the two packers.

"I've got together a few little things I thought you might overlook, Mr. Roger," said John. "It doesn't seem possible you're really going to leave."

"I haven't got quite used to the idea myself," returned Roger as cheerfully as possible; "but I reckon I will."

"I don't want to seem forward, Mr. Roger, but if you'll pardon me I've been wondering what you're going to do."

"I've been taking a little trip in wonderland myself. You see, I haven't made my plans yet, John."

The butler followed upstairs, shaking his head and muttering to himself. In his rooms Roger found that John had had his trunks brought from the storeroom, and piled on a table were his personal belongings, which the faithful old servant had gathered up from various parts of the house.

"I packed your wardrobe trunk with my own hands, Mr. Roger," said the butler; "but I couldn't begin to get half your clothes in it. I laid the rest of them out all ready for packing, as I didn't know which one of the trunks you'd want to use that way."

"My trunks won't carry everything I want to take," said Roger, "but I've a couple of packing boxes in the dray. My father gave me leave to move everything that really belongs to me, and I'm going to take him at his word as far as I can. Now we'll get busy."

Shedding his coat and rolling up his sleeves, he worked as hard as either of the two men, meanwhile giving them directions by which the task was accomplished in the briefest time and the most efficient manner. Nevertheless, it required fully two hours before everything was loaded on the dray and they were ready to start. Roger took a last look around his dismantled room, and muttered to himself:

"Well, good-by to this! It's a new deal for me,

and I'm going to play a lone hand; but if I don't handle my cards better than I have in the past I'm a chump."

When, out of the fifty or sixty dollars remaining in his pocket, he attempted to slip a five-dollar bill into the butler's hand, the latter objected and refused to take it.

"I can't, Mr. Roger," he said. "I appreciate it, I'm sure, but really I can't. I've saved my money, and I've got a little bank account. I'd feel like a robber if I took a penny from you now."

"John, you're all right!" said Roger, placing both hands on the butler's shoulders, and looking him straight in the eyes. "I'd rather begun to doubt people generally, but you're the second man I've found. If fortune comes my way I won't forget you."

Then, as the old man's chin began to quiver a little, and a suspicious moisture showed in his eyes, Roger gripped his hand and turned hastily away. At the door, whither the butler had followed him, the latter called:

"You haven't taken your motor cycle, Mr. Roger. Your father gave you that, and it's yours as much as anything. It's in the garage."

"I haven't forgotten it, John," was the smiling reply. "It will save me a bumping ride on the dray, and I may need it later to economize on car fare. Good-by."

"Your address—don't you want to leave your address for your father?"

The young man burst into genuine, hearty laughter. "I hardly think so," he replied. "I'm sure it wouldn't interest him in the least."

Having given the driver final instructions, and watched the dray roll heavily away down the gravel drive, Roger proceeded to the garage, and found his motor cycle. It was of the very latest type, a powerful and speedy machine, and he smiled as he made sure the little tank was filled with gasoline.

"I won a race trophy with you last spring, old boy," he said, "and I reckon you'd help me pick up a dollar if I was forced to get into a race for real money with you. At any rate, if I have to sell you, you'll keep me off the park benches for a time."

In ten minutes he was speeding southward through Pelham Bay Park. Crossing the bridge, he followed the parkway to the southwest, finally reaching the Concourse and heading due south for Harlem. Hours after he reached a Harlem lodging house in which he had taken a modest furnished room the dray arrived, and two trunks, containing clothes and other belongings which he had packed with a view to immediate needs, were brought up. The rest of his goods were carted away for storage.

"Now," said Roger, as he began unpacking the trunks, "I'll get settled down in these temporary quarters, and to-morrow I'll look around and see what sort of a job I can strike to keep the wolf from the door."

He had cut himself off deliberately from former friends and associates, among whom he felt sure there were not a few who would gladly help him in time of need. A hundred times, perhaps, he had gone deep into his pockets to accommodate some of those fellows, temporarily broke, but never yet in his life had he himself borrowed as much as a dollar; and never had he dreamed that fortune would bring him—son of the rich Henry Boltwood—face to face with such a necessity.

"And I won't borrow," he vowed. "By pawning or selling some of my stuff I can live for a couple of months. In that time I'll get on my feet if I'm of any earthly use at all."

It cannot be denied that Roger had qualms of doubt for the future. It cannot be truthfully said that he now faced that future with a feeling of elation; and had he yielded he would have found himself as blue as a whetstone. It was no easy matter for him to put aside the swarming thoughts of those fine, enjoyable things which had so recently been his to the full. Like one in a dream, he was almost forced to pinch himself in order to realize that college, college life, its sports, its joys,

its companionships—all had been snatched from him in the twinkling of an eye. Before him rose visions of the elm-shaded campus, the jovial, gossiping crowds at the Fence, his own elegant rooms in Liberty Hall, his chums gathering there, himself surrounded by those chums, cheering the varsity at some baseball or football game.

But these were not all the visions which haunted him. He saw green baize tables lighted by shaded lamps, young men in their shirt sleeves drinking wine, perhaps, and playing cards—for money. He saw cafés, music enlivened, swarming with flushed and boisterous young merrymakers. He saw moonlighted roads, a speeding touring car, himself at the wheel, and singing companions of both sexes in the tonneau. Like one gazing on a revelation, he saw not only the clean and wholesome things of college life in which he had participated, but all the waste and folly and excesses which had lured him with siren voices. Without comprehending it, he had sailed close to rocks strewn with the skeletons of other victims; but now, awakened at last, and getting a mighty grip on himself, he was resolved to make a stern struggle to escape complete wreckage.

"A fool!" he said bitterly. "That's what I was —a fool among fools. How quickly some of the pack took to their heels when they thought I was

down for fair. By all the gods, I'll come up! They say they never come back. Well, we'll see if Roger Boltwood has it in him to come back."

CHAPTER VI

UP AGAINST IT

WHEN an inexperienced young man with a half-finished education and no training whatever in the practical business affairs of life sets out to seek a position in New York without the aid of a pull of any sort, he soon comes to realize that he is up against a hard proposition. Of course, if he is willing to work at almost anything that will keep body and soul together, he may, should he be strong and husky, get a job as coal heaver, truckman, or something of the sort; which, to be sure, is better than nothing at all. But Roger Boltwood held to his dream of returning to Yale, and to save enough money for the purpose by ordinary day labor would require far more time than he wished to spend. On the other hand, a single day of fruitless beating about in search of the big thing for which he yearned left him tremendously downcast, if not disheartened.

"I said I'd do it," he muttered, as he paced the narrow confines of his Harlem room that night; "but, by Jove, I'd like to know how I'm going to.

There are barrels and hogsheads of money made every day in this old town by men with nothing but a little wit and a lot of sheer nerve, but I'm raw, and I certainly don't know the game. Of course, I might raise a little pot on my belongings, and chance it at the cards, the ponies, or take a stock flyer on margins. I've always been lucky at games of chance, but old Dame Fortune smiled on me when I could afford to lose. Now that losing would squash me, probably she'd promptly turn the cold shoulder. Anyway, I've made up my mind to cut all that sort of stuff, and I'm not going to play the jellyfish as soon as this."

Twice that day, staggered by rebuffs and disappointments, he had been tempted to seek a bracer at a bar. Never before in all his life had he felt the slightest inclination to take a drink by himself. In truth, Roger had no taste for drink, and he had never indulged in it save in a convivial way with rollicking companions. It was the conviviality, the good-fellowship of the thing, that had appealed to him.

Pacing his room after the day of failure, he came to realize that he had dallied with all the foolish and dangerous things which are sure to tempt a fellow of his class in any big college. He realized likewise that by such a course he had missed much that is clean, healthy, fine, and uplifting in college life. Comprehending this, he did

not whine or give way to remorse. He was beset by regret, certainly, but luckily he was the sort of man who could profit by his blunders when fate led him to survey those blunders in their true light.

"If Dolliver, Todd, Henry Boltwood, and the rest fancy I'm going to the dogs, they're all mistaken," he growled. "I'll show them yet—I'll show them—every one of them!"

Brave, fine-sounding words! He clenched his fist and half lifted it, his jaw set, his nostrils dilated a trifle, his eyes glowing from beneath lowered brows. A fine pose for a stage hero defying disaster! But Roger was absolutely unconscious that he was posing, and there was no one to hear or see him.

He did not sleep well that second night in his Harlem room. In vain he tried to read himself to sleep, as was frequently his custom. The printed page could not absorb his attention. He read sentences over repeatedly without getting their meaning. The words ran into a blur, and he would find himself thinking, thinking. Then he flung the book across the room and turned out the light.

Loneliness came and sat heavily upon him. Never before had he felt its crushing weight. Always there had been hosts of friendly fellows, to some of whom he could fly whenever he felt the

need of companionship. But now he was cut off from all these, and alone—absolutely alone. There are few human sensations more horrible than this feeling, or more likely to drive one to some reckless, rebellious, law-defying action.

Morning found him weary, but still undaunted. He took breakfast in a cheap little restaurant, running through column after column of "Help Wanted" advertisements in a morning paper. His search yielded nothing beyond a realization that to secure any position by which a comfortable amount of money could be made honestly in a short time a person absolutely needed certain abilities and experience which no half-trained college man possessed. Up to this time Roger's familiarity with his father's prosperity and the ready way in which money seemed to roll in upon Henry Boltwood had led him to believe that dollars were something not at all difficult for a man to obtain if he only had brains and determination.

Now, however, he was slowly beginning to realize the fact that the possession of brains does not necessarily qualify any one to be a money getter, and the most determined person in the world may, through evil circumstances or adverse fate, be forced to beg or steal to avoid starvation. The conviction that the money-making faculty is something entirely disassociated with unusual brain

power dawned upon young Boltwood as a great light breaking through dense clouds.

"But it's true," he thought. "Some of the brainiest men in the world are poor, and some of the biggest fools in every other way are tremendous money-makers. It can't be all luck, nevertheless. My father is a financier, and I've got his blood in my veins. I've simply got to find out how to do it, that's all."

He did not pause to think how slowly and steadily Henry Boltwood had risen through the years to his present opulence. He did not stop to think that, placed in the same circumstances as his son, and requiring a considerable sum of money in a short time, Henry Boltwood himself might lack the ability to accomplish the feat.

"No man of sense refuses advice and a friendly lift in time of need," decided Roger. "Among all my chums there's just one I'm willing to take a chance on now; that's Wallace Clinton. Let me see; he's stopping out at Bayside. Perhaps Clinton can suggest something. By Jove, I'm going to try him."

Having reached this decision, in less than an hour his motor cycle bore him chugging over the Williamsburg Bridge into Brooklyn.

CHAPTER VII

A LUCKY STRIKE

ON a quiet, rather lonely strip of road, two or three miles from Flushing, Roger came upon a stalled car, in which sat a solitary, impatient man. As he drew near the car —a racy-looking gray roadster—Boltwood eyed it appraisingly.

"A Keating, I'll bet," he muttered. "Seems to be hung up. Where's the chauffeur? Perhaps he's hoofed it off to find a telephone to call for a tow."

Hearing the popping of the approaching motor cycle, the man in the car half rose and turned round. He was slightly past middle age, spare, quick motioned, and had a gray mustache trimmed off square with his straight upper lip. He wore a duster, and his goggles had been lifted to rest above the visor of his cap.

"Hey, there!" he called sharply, holding up his hand.

Roger shut off spark and juice, and braked the motor cycle to a standstill beside the gray roadster.

"What's the trouble?" he asked. "Can I do anything?"

"Trouble! Trouble!" snapped the man in the car angrily. "I'm hung up. My chauffeur spent an hour puttering, and then he quit and went after help. He's been gone long enough to find a telephone, call a garage, and get back twenty minutes ago. Hang it! I can't roost here. I've got to be moving. I've got to get to Dempford. If you'll get me a car from the first garage, and be quick about it, I'll pay you ten dollars. I've got a notion my chauffeur is playing crooked. They're all playing crooked, confound them! We're dealing with a rotten mess of rascals. But I'm taking things into my own hands, and there'll be something doing when I reach our garage at Dempford."

Long ere this Roger had made the surprising discovery that the man who was chattering to him in this excited manner was none other than Cyrus Keating himself. There was, however, no reason why the principal stockholder of the Keating Automobile Company should recognize Henry Boltwood's son. This was the first time they had ever met face to face.

"What's the matter with your car?" questioned Roger. "Perhaps I can start her."

"Think you'll waste time, young man, if you try. Do you know anything about cars?"

"Something," was the smiling answer. "I've driven a little."

"What car?"

"Oh, different ones—the Comet mostly."

Cyrus Keating snorted. "The Comet! Bah! Those people think they've got a real car. They even think they're going to eat us up in the race day after to-morrow. Maybe they will, but if they do it will be through crookedness. They're trying every underhand means possible to down us."

"Why should they be especially anxious to beat your car?" inquired Roger innocently.

"Old grudge. Too long a story to tell. Old Boltwood hates me like poison, and I own I'm not losing any love on him. He's got a fine lieutenant in that double-dyed sneak, Christy. Christy's a highwayman. I know him. But, say, we're wasting time."

"How did your car stop?"

"It just stopped. It was going along all right, and all of a sudden it quit firing and stopped."

"Then there's no serious breakdown. The trouble probably is in the ignition. Let me see if I can't remedy it. Perhaps I can."

Roger had the hood up in a moment, and was making an examination beneath it.

"Did your chauffeur do anything to the plugs?"

"Oh, he fiddled around them. I looked myself to see if the connections were tight."

"He used a wrench on the plugs, did he?" said Roger. "Let me get at your tool box."

"I know you're wasting time, young man," expostulated Keating.

But Roger gave no heed. Securing a wrench, he lost little time in removing one of the plugs. The moment his eyes rested on the firing points a queer expression flashed over his face, and, continuing to pay no heed to the owner of the car, he removed the remaining plugs as quickly as he could.

"You're right in saying your chauffeur is crooked," he announced, holding up the plugs for Keating to see. "Look at those points. Every one of them jammed together—short-circuited. No break for the spark to jump. Of course, the car wouldn't fire after he doctored the plugs in this fashion."

"Jumping Moses!" shouted Cyrus Keating wrathfully. "I suspected the confounded rascal! But the car stopped before he touched the plugs."

"Easiest thing in the world for him to throw off the magneto with his toe without your noticing it. Then all he had to do was to doctor these plugs, and any one could grind his head off without firing a cylinder."

"This is a part of the dirty game!" raged Keat-

ing. "They got wise that I'm on to the crooked deal. Murphy held me up here, and I suppose he rushed to a telephone and warned them that I was coming down. That would give them time to have the racer fixed so that it could be inspected, in case they have been doctoring it already for a breakdown on the course. Say, if old Boltwood is behind this business, he ought to go to Sing Sing!"

"Why should you feel so sure that Henry Boltwood would resort to such despicable methods?" demanded Roger, feeling his cheeks burning a bit warmly. "Have you any proof against him?"

"I've got a letter—got it in my pocket. It was taken off Jasper Christy's desk. Er—that is, I mean to say—I mean—er—"

In his wrath, Keating had let slip a statement which he instantly regretted.

"A letter—to whom?" questioned Roger, as he deftly spread the firing points of the plugs, one after another. "What sort of a letter?"

"Oh, never mind," growled Keating, angry with himself and resentful at the young man's curiosity. "It doesn't concern you. Do you think the plugs will fire now?"

"If the porcelain isn't cracked in any of them they'll fire all right."

A farmer came up through a field, and approached the road.

"Breakdown?" he asked, as he paused to watch Roger. "Them things go pretty slick when they go, but they ain't wuth a rap when they quit. Gimme a horse for mine."

"If a horse breaks a leg," returned Roger, as he reset the plugs in the cylinders with the wrench, "it's done for; but if an automobile breaks an axle you can put in a new one. Now, Mr. Keating, we'll connect up these wires, and you can be off in no time."

"Without a driver," grumbled Keating. "I don't drive myself—only when I have to. Don't like it; never did. Say, young man, if she goes, why can't you drive her down to Dempford?"

"I've got my motor cycle."

"Leave it here. Leave it with this man. I'll pay him to take it and take care of it. I'll pay you to drive me down. What do you say?"

"Well, I'm out for money," answered Roger. "If this man will take my motor cycle and keep it until—"

"Sure!" put in the farmer. "I live just over the hill there, second house on the left. My name is Benson—Adam Benson. Everybody round here knows me."

"Here, Benson," said Keating, pulling out a fat pocketbook and opening it, to display a package of bills that made the farmer's eyes bulge,

"here's five for you, and you can't earn it any easier. Now, if this car fires—"

Roger had thrown the switch on to the batteries, and now he gave the crank a single half flip. Instantly the engine responded, every cylinder speaking out distinctly.

"Hooray!" cheered Keating. "You certainly have delivered the real goods. Say, I like your looks. If you're out for a job, and you can drive as well as you tinker, I'll hire you. Get in! Let's hit it up. I'm going to step on somebody when I land in Dempford!"

CHAPTER VIII

A ROAD RACE

LIKE a ghost, the gray roadster sped over the winding Long Island roads. The silence of the engine was remarkable, for only when he opened the cut-out could Roger hear the firing of the cylinders. On the levels, uphill, running light or under pull, there was a total absence of vibration, and the driver arrived at the intuitive conviction that the Keating was a real car, worthy to be classed with the finest American products. It had speed; there was no question about that. And its instant response to the slightest touch on the accelerator gave it a feeling of life and vim that sent the blood tingling through Boltwood's veins.

And Roger could drive. He had a clear eye, a quick brain, nerves like woven steel, and, above-all, a keen, inborn delight in handling a motor car. In pinches where a less cool and ready-witted driver might have lost his head, Boltwood never failed to do the right thing. True, he had had his smashes, but, with the exception of that last grand ditching, caused by an oily road and a sharp turn

which he had tried to make at high speed, the accidents that had befallen him had been the fault of others who had placed him in positions from which no man could have escaped unscathed.

Keating watched his new pilot critically, making no comment for a little time. Presently, however, he observed:

"I guess you can drive, young man. You handle her like you'd always run a Keating."

Roger smiled. "She doesn't operate much differently from a Comet."

"But she's a better car—a blame sight better car! She's got more speed and endurance."

"I'm not disputing you, Mr. Keating, but she hasn't got any more hill-climbing power. You know, the Comet beat the Keating last spring in the Dead Horse Hill climb."

"Yes, yes," growled the man, "and I've always had my suspicions about that. That's why I tried to take special pains to guard against anything crooked in the coming cup race. The fellow who drove the Comet at Dead Horse Hill got every last ounce out of her. He was on the level, of course, because he happened to be—"

"Henry Boltwood's son," said Roger, smiling. "My father didn't want to let me drive, but I coaxed him into it."

Cyrus Keating came within an ace of jumping clean out of the car. "Your what?" he

shouted. "Your father! What the— Say, are you old Boltwood's boy?" Stiff as a ramrod, he had half turned, and was glaring at the man beside him.

"I'm Roger Boltwood," was the quiet answer.

"Well, I'll be—eternally blowed!" burst from old Cyrus. "What the Sam Hill are you doing here? Looking for a job, you said. Why, what the—what the—"

"Looking for a job, and glad to earn ten dollars," admitted Roger as they glided gently over a strip of perfect macadam. "You see, I'm hitting it up on my own hook now. My father has kindly given me an opportunity to prove whether I have got it in me to earn a living or starve."

"You don't mean—"

"Yes, we had a little misunderstanding, followed by an understanding that leaves me to shift for myself in the world. My habits were a bit extravagant, and I confess I didn't give proper heed to the governor's various warnings. He fired me, bag and baggage."

Keating took a long breath. "Just trying to scare you, I reckon."

"I thought you knew something of my father's disposition. Whatever you may think of him, Mr. Keating, he never makes a bluff. When he says a thing he means it, and he's said that he's done with me."

They had entered a little town, and were running through it at a speed discreetly breaking the local regulations. At the curb in front of a store a man was cranking a big car, at the sight of which Keating's eyes suddenly took on a glitter.

"A Ranco," he said, forgetting Roger for a moment. "They think they're going to be in the race with that thing. She can go while she goes, but she'll never stand the strain. A hundred miles will put her out of commission."

"Well," returned Roger, "with the Ranco and the Comet eliminated, it ought to be pretty soft for the Keating."

"All depends on our driver, barring bad luck. But I'm worried—I own it. Prowley, the man I selected, is crooked. I've got the proof of it here in my pocket. There are two others, but how do I know they are not fixed? I tell you, this automobile-racing game is getting to be worse than turf racing. It was different once. Now the competition is so keen that it's anything to win. The winner of one of these races is bound to make money on his next season's sales. Everybody wants a fast car, and one that will stand more pounding than an express locomotive. It's speed, speed they want; but the machine has got to stand up on any old road. Besides, your father's company is planning to enlarge its plant. They want

capital, and they won't have any trouble in getting it if they can win the Traymore Cup."

"Capital!" said Roger incredulously. "Why, their capital is practically limitless."

Keating's thin face twisted into an odd smile. "So you think," he said; "but sometimes the biggest concerns have all their ready capital tied up, and find themselves in need of more money. Look at the Fenton Company, one of the biggest in this country, turning out cars by the minute almost. At the highest notch they went to smash, and had to reorganize. They're back in the game again, for they have a medium-priced car that's a seller."

They had left the town, and Roger was speeding up again. Suddenly behind them sounded the shrill, nerve-wrenching shriek of a siren. Cyrus Keating jerked his body round and looked back. In another moment he was keyed up with excitement.

"Here comes that Ranco!" he shouted. "Coming like blazes, and whooping for us to turn out. Hit it up—hit it up! Don't let that tub pass us! We've got nine miles of clear road."

Roger did not look round, but in his mind he saw a vision of the Ranco coming like the wind. The pursuers had the advantage of already-acquired momentum, and the air was literally shuddering with the demands of their siren.

Boltwood's right foot pressed the accelerator firmly, while his left one kicked the cut-out wide open, and the Keating jumped like a horse spur-stabbed. Louder and louder sounded the siren behind them, and the exhaust of the Keating roared like thunder.

"Shall I give them room?" cried Roger, without turning his head. "Shall I give them a chance to get by if they can?"

"Sure!" was the instant answer. "But, for the love o' Mike, don't let them do it!"

That was enough. The road ahead was clear, and, giving the challenging car an opening to pass, Roger jockeyed the Keating to the best of his ability. His blood was leaping, his jaw set, his hands steady as iron, yet apparently light as feathers, upon the steering wheel. With the advantage of speed already acquired, the Ranco came up and forged alongside until Roger vaguely saw the cap of the hood from the corner of his eye. The siren was silent now, but the open mufflers of the two cars drummed the air deafeningly.

Having given the roadster all the throttle she would stand, and thus forced her quickly to a tremendous pace, Roger carefully cut down his gas, hair by hair, at the same time advancing the spark in search of still greater speed.

He felt it coming. Like a lion-hearted thoroughbred entering the stretch, the Keating let it-

self out to the last degree. This was not the racer of the company; it was a stock car. But had Roger Boltwood ventured to glance at the indicator of the speedometer he would have seen that it presently touched seventy miles an hour, and crept past.

For more than a mile the Ranco held on like a bulldog, but eventually it began dropping back little by little. Seeing this, Cyrus Keating shouted something which was not heard amid the uproar.

"I've got them!" chuckled Roger to himself. "It's lucky we had a clear strip of road. It's lucky we didn't meet this fellow back there a mile or two."

"This fellow" was an automobile headed in the opposite direction from the racers, and Roger passed like a hurricane, noting with satisfaction as he did so that the stranger had wisely taken almost to the ditch, thus giving the Ranco plenty of room in case the driver of the latter car should be crowding that side of the highway.

It was dangerous—reckless, perhaps—doubtless unlawful; but Cyrus Keating had given orders, and Roger had obeyed. He was filled with exultation by the joyous thrill of it, and by the consciousness of triumph over an insolent challenger.

Two miles farther on Keating slapped him on the back, leaning near to shout in his ear:

"It's all right; I'm satisfied. You made the old Ranco look like a lame mud turtle. Good boy! Let up now; let them go by if they want to. There'll be lots of satisfaction in it for them! Say, you can drive—you sure can!"

CHAPTER IX

FIRED!

THE Ranco did not again attempt to pass. Evidently it had had enough, and Cyrus Keating chuckled. "If I had a man to drive like that," he said, "I'd be willing to bet my bottom dollar we could walk away with the Traymore Cup."

"I'm the man," said Boltwood. "Why don't you give me the chance?"

"You!" spluttered his companion incredulously. "You!"

"Yes. Why not?"

"You're old Boltwood's son!"

Roger laughed outright. "I thought I made it plain to you that we have dissolved partnership."

"But you—your sympathy—"

"Do you have an idea that my sympathy is going to be very pronounced for the parent who has turned me out of doors? Why, I haven't finished my college course—it's barely begun. Yet here I am, practically busted, and unable to get back to Yale. I've got to make money. All day yesterday I tried for a job. Perhaps I could have

found one with a pick and shovel, but it would take some time for me to save enough money on such wages to return to college. I've wondered what I could do. Now I know. I can drive a car —in a race, or any other old way."

"You can drive," admitted Cyrus Keating; "you sure can. But in a race? Your license from the association?"

"I hold one. Have you forgotten that it was necessary in the Dead Horse Hill climb? I looked out for that, and my father consented. That license is still good."

Keating shook his head. "No, no," he muttered; "it wouldn't do. Besides, your age—you're under age, aren't you?"

"To-morrow I'll be twenty-one."

"To-morrow the Traymore Cup race comes off. But I don't know; it doesn't look wise to me."

"Think it over," urged Roger eagerly. "Think it over, and remember what I'm going to tell you now: If you let me drive in that race, your car will win if it's got winning stuff in it."

"You smashed a Comet over in Jersey—"

Roger flushed hotly. "I'd been hitting it up with a bunch of fellows, Mr. Keating. I'm through with that business."

"But you might want a drink or two to brace you—"

Boltwood laughed scornfully. "You haven't seen much of me yet; but do you think I need bracers for my nerves?"

"No—by thunder, no! Your nerves are all right. And if I were in your place I don't reckon I'd have much love for my old man. But, say, to put a Boltwood in a Keating Kar to drive against the Comet—great smoke! Still, there's one thing I feel pretty sure of—you're honest; I can read it in your face. You don't have to tell me you'd win if you could, provided you drove. But I don't think it wise; I don't think it's advisable; I can't just see it."

Roger said no more, for he realized that mere words at this point would be wasted. Nevertheless, he continued to entertain a hope that something would lead Cyrus Keating to take him at his offer.

They entered the town of Dempford, passing round the village by a skirting road, and came on to the course. The big stand near the starting and finishing line was ready for the throngs that would pack it, but farther along the course carpenters were at work on other and smaller stands. Two racing cars came roaring out of the distance, separated by less than an eighth of a mile, and went past, each bearing its helmeted driver and mechanician.

"The Echo and the Prince," said Keating.

"They're feeling out the course and testing their cars. Perhaps Prowley is out with our racer."

But when they approached the garages and ran up to one bearing the sign "Keating Kar," they saw through the wide-open doors the powerful racer standing with its nose toward the open air, as if longing silently to get out there upon the course. There was no one around the car, and at the man's invitation Roger followed Mr. Keating into the garage.

"Hey, here, where's everybody?" shouted the automobile manufacturer, in a tone of voice which brought a sleepy-looking man popping up from the tonneau of a Keating touring car standing in a dusky corner. "What the deuce does this mean?"

The sleepy man gave his eyes a rub, and leaped out of the touring car as if electrified.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Keating?" he said, sheepishly approaching. "We didn't expect—"

"No, you didn't expect me. That's odd, too. Anything the matter with your telephone?"

"It's out of order."

"Out of order, hey? Now, that's fine! What do you have a telephone here for? Out of order! Who put it out of order?"

"Why—nobody, sir," was the hasty answer. "It just simply got out of order."

"Is that so? Well, I'll have an electrician ex-

amine the telephone. Have you asked to have a man sent by the company to fix it up?"

"I think Prowley attended to that."

"You think! You think, hey? What are you here for, Messenger? You're in charge of this garage. Prowley's a driver. Where is he? Where are the mechanicians? What do you mean by sleeping and leaving the racing car with the garage doors wide open for anybody to come in and get at it?"

"I didn't know every one was gone," Messenger protested weakly. "I supposed one or two of the men were around."

"Oh, yes, I understand!" flung back Cyrus Keating with bitter sarcasm. "Telephone out of order so nobody can get you. Tripped yourself that time. I rather think you'd heard from Tim Murphy near an hour ago if he could have gotten you. You'd known I was coming down. You'd been all prepared to receive me. Messenger, you're discharged! I'm going to clean out this crooked bunch. Not a word, not another word out of you! You can have your pay any minute you want it. Now I'll see if—"

He stopped short and jerked round toward the door as two men came panting into the garage. Dashing in as they did from the bright sunlight outside, they were doubtless blinded, and failed to recognize Cyrus Keating.

"Ho, Dave!" called the one in advance. "Who's here? Murphy telephoned through central that the old man is coming, and the message just reached me. He— Thunder!"

Keating had advanced into the strong light, and the speaker, recognizing him, choked up short.

"Prowley," said the spare man in the duster, his voice cold as iron and hard as flint, "you're fired, along with Messenger."

"Fired!"

"Now, don't make any back talk. You're fired!"

Prowley drew himself up to his full height, his face dark with chagrin and anger. "Fired! What for?" he snarled. "Because you didn't happen to find me here? I've been out to get an electrician to fix our telephone. I left Messenger to take care of things here. You don't expect me to stay round this place every minute, do you, Mr. Keating?"

"Your being out just now has very little to do with your discharge. You're quite a letter writer, aren't you, Prowley? I know your writing, even if you do sign some of your letters with your initials only. I've got one of those little epistles in my pocket right now. It was sent to Jasper Christy, secretary and treasurer of the Comet Motor Car Company. Oh, I guess that's enough. I reckon you understand. You worded the letter

rather craftily, but I can read between the lines. Perhaps he will pay you your price—but, by the eternal skies, you won't deliver the goods by throwing the Traymore Cup race! Get me?"

"It's a mistake," mumbled Prowley, his face now the color of putty. "I never wrote a letter to Jasper Christy in—"

"Oh, don't lie—for Heaven's sake, don't lie! It won't do you any good."

"I don't believe you've got such a letter. You're suspicious of everybody. You're simply trying to test me. You can't show any letter."

Cyrus Keating took the letter from his pocket, and held it above his head.

"Let me see it," demanded Prowley, advancing.

"Not much! You won't get your hands on—What—"

Prowley had made a spring and a snatch at the letter. An instant later Roger Boltwood's fist landed with a crack fairly behind Prowley's ear, and the man went down.

"Much obliged, son," said Keating, quickly thrusting the letter back into his pocket. "That was—"

Lifting himself, Prowley shouted to his two companions:

"At him! Climb 'em both! Get that letter! Get into them, Dave! Go for them, Pete!"

Then Messenger attempted to obey, and the man called Pete charged forward at the solicitation of the rascally driver, who was rising from the cement floor. In a moment Roger Boltwood was very busy indeed. He gave his attention first to Messenger, and it was fortunate that he found a quick opening to land on the man's jaw, for that enabled him to turn and meet the other ruffian with a tremendous punch that doubled him up instantly.

On his feet, Prowley, his teeth gleaming between lips curled back in a snarl, lunged forward again.

"So you want some more?" said Roger. "Well, here you have it!"

He knocked Prowley down the second time.

Then Roger seized Pete by the neck, dragged him bodily to the wide-open doors, and kicked him out. He was back in time to pick up Prowley with a grip on his collar, and Prowley followed Pete. Messenger was actually crawling toward the door when Roger vigorously assisted him outside.

"Now," said the unexcited, and not even panting, young man, "you three bums want to hit the turf, and hit it lively. If any of you shows his face back in this garage he'll get it busted for fair."

CHAPTER X

A MATTER OF DOUBT

CYRUS KEATING had not found it necessary to lift a hand to assist Roger, and he watched with growing astonishment and admiration the efficient manner in which the latter disposed of three husky opponents.

"Well, well, well!" he breathed, as he gazed at Roger, now standing in the open door of the garage and ordering the battered and discomfited rascals off. "He certainly has the real goods. Never saw a cleaner job, or one quicker finished, in all my life."

Then suddenly he thought of his own son, and compared him with the son of Henry Boltwood. The comparison was unpleasant.

Meanwhile, Roger watched Prowley and his companions as they picked themselves up and slunk away. Before disappearing round the corner of the garage, Prowley halted and turned, showing his teeth as he glared at the sturdy young man in the garage doorway.

"I'll git you!" he rasped. "I'll git you yet!"

Roger's reply was a half-scornful, half-pitying

smile. A hand fell on his shoulder, and he looked round to find Cyrus Keating beside him.

"I want to thank you for that little turn you just put across in my behalf," said the automobile manufacturer. "Only for you, Prowley would have got that letter. And, though it doesn't commit him outright, his anxiety to secure it was proof enough of his crookedness—and Jasper Christy's also. Say, you can handle your dukes!"

"I can box a little," answered Roger modestly.

"A little! Why, son, you're a rip-roaring, human tornado. Those dubs didn't stand a ghost of a show with you. You handled them like they were children."

"What I did I had to do in a hurry in order to have anything like a show with them. If they had all got at me together it might have been different."

"Don't believe it. I'll bet the whole rotten three of them could come at you in a bunch, and you'd polish 'em off just the same."

"You flatter me, Mr. Keating."

"There are two more of the same sort who haven't shown up. Jim Hickman showed that he stood in with Prowley and Messenger by his response when Prowley called on him, and if these three were together it's likely the other two are of the same ilk. I shall discharge them also.

That leaves us without a single man here—and the race is to-morrow! If this telephone was working I'd get Thurlow on the wire, and have some men sent down at once. I'll do it, anyhow. I'll telephone from the hotel, or the central office in town. Messenger picked his men, and, of course, he picked the ones he could count on. Here come the other pair now."

Two youngish men in jumpers and overalls were seen approaching, one of them bearing on his shoulder a small box that had an express label pasted on the side. They appeared somewhat surprised to see Cyrus Keating there.

"What have you got, Rollins?" asked Keating sharply.

"Some tools from the factory, sir," answered the man with the express box.

"Tools! Why, I thought you had everything—"

"Prowley lost a kit out on the course yesterday. Stopped to do a little repairing, and left his tools by accident. Somebody got 'em."

"Careless of Prowley," said Keating sarcastically. "He's been so very careless of late that he's lost his job. Yes, he's gone—for good. Put down that box, Rollins."

The man obeyed wonderingly, while his companion stood fidgeting in evident uneasiness and apprehension.

"Now," announced the automobile manufacturer quietly, "you and Griscolm can go. Yes, I've decided to make a complete change here, and you won't be needed any longer. You can get your money at my office in the city, and any personal belongings you happen to have in this garage you can pick up day after to-morrow—after the race is over. Yes, you've got it straight," he snapped, as the men attempted to demand an explanation. "If you want to know why, go to Bill Prowley. You won't need anything belonging to you in the garage, for I'll let you draw your pay until after the race."

" 'Tain't right," whined Griscolm. " 'Tain't right to fire us this way, without giving no reasons. Then, if we've got to go, we may get another job, and need our stuff."

"If that happens you can come round for your truck later in the day—any time after three o'clock this afternoon. Just now you can't come in here to put hands on anything. For the present there'll be no more monkey business in this garage."

It was plain that Rollins and Griscolm realized the uselessness of words, and, after looking Roger over appraisingly, they turned and started off, talking excitedly and angrily.

"Now," said Cyrus Keating when the pair had passed from view, "I want you to stand by me

a little longer, young man. I don't propose to leave this garage unguarded, and I've got to do some telephoning in short order."

"You want me to stay here and look after the place?"

"That's it. You'd better shut the doors, and keep them shut and fastened. It will be the safest way, and may save you a lot of trouble. I'll come back as soon as I can. I don't reckon anybody will bother with the roadster out there, but of course you can run it inside if you think best."

"Perhaps it's wise," said Roger. "I'll move the racer and make room to bring the roadster in."

He cranked the racer, backed it, and had the roadster inside the garage in less than two minutes. Then, at Keating's repeated advice, the garage doors were closed and fastened when the automobile man went away to do his telephoning.

Left alone, Roger was given an opportunity to think and nurse his knuckles, which he discovered, with surprise, had been skinned in the recent encounter.

"Well," he smilingly murmured, "there's certainly been something doing to-day. I'm glad of it. It's a relief. Cyrus Keating must be all right, and I've always heard he was a fractious, narrow-souled, tricky old rat. I'd ought to have known that sort of a man couldn't have a daughter like his. I suppose I was judging the old man by what

I knew of Tom. He's a spoiled whelp. But, then, I reckon plenty of people say the same thing about me.

"Great Scott! What if Keating should let me drive in the race! I wish he would. If he'd only trust me, and give me a chance! It would stagger one Henry Boltwood a little. And if I could beat the Comet it would stagger him still more. Is there any reason why I shouldn't do it? I can't see any. Of course, he's my father, but after what's happened it's up to me to make a living in any honest way I choose. All I ask is a chance in this race."

He was given plenty of time for thoughts like these, as Cyrus Keating did not return for more than an hour. At length Roger heard him knocking and calling at the door, and hastened to open it.

Keating entered, followed by a boy bearing several packages. "Lunch," explained the automobile manufacturer. "You ought to be hungry by this time. I am. Of course we might have taken turns, one standing guard while the other went over to the hotel to eat, but I thought you wouldn't mind a cold snack with me. It will give us a chance to talk."

"I think it will be very pleasant," said Roger.

So the boy was tipped and sent away, after which the packages were carried into a little room

which had been fixed up something like an office.

"I'll have some men down here by two o'clock," said Keating. "Thurlow, one of my sales managers, thinks he will be able to send down an honest and reliable driver by three o'clock, which would give the man a chance to take the racer out and go over the course."

Roger's heart sank suddenly, but he made no comment. After a brief pause, opening up the packages, which had been placed on a box that served as a table, Cyrus Keating added:

"Dehasset is the man Thurlow thinks he can get. You know Dehasset? Went through the fence out in Denver, and killed two people, besides smashing himself up some. They said it had got his nerve, and he'd never drive again; but Thurlow says that he's fully recovered, and wants to get back into the game."

Another pause, during which, as he spread out some tempting sandwiches, the older man eyed his youthful companion quizzically.

"What do you think about it?" he asked suddenly. "What do you think about a man driving in this race after a smash of that sort, which led him, in a hospital, to make the announcement that he was done with the game?"

"Really, Mr. Keating," said Roger, "not being personally acquainted with the man, I don't feel competent to answer your question. Perhaps

he's all right. Perhaps he can drive in another race to win, just the same as if he had not been smashed. Other drivers have come within an ace of death and continued to be successful at the wheel."

"I don't believe a man who has really lost his nerve once in that way ever gets it back again," asserted Cyrus Keating. "Here we are, ready for lunch, and I've got more appetite than I've had for a month. Let's feed!"

CHAPTER XI

KEATING DECIDES

THAT lunch was a pleasant affair, even though Cyrus Keating questioned Boltwood about himself in a very personal manner, and the latter was compelled to make some answers which brought the color into his face. Nevertheless, Roger was perfectly honest and frank—a fact which the older man fully recognized, and which caused him to like him all the better.

The boy from the hotel had brought beer with the lunch, and Keating washed down his food with a bottle; but Roger quietly declined to take any.

"I've had my turn with that stuff, and I think I'm done with it," he said.

"But it's only beer, you know. All college men drink beer."

"No, not all of them, Mr. Keating."

"There's nothing harmful in a glass of beer now and then."

"Possibly not, but declining is no sacrifice for me. I never cared for it, though I've swilled it down like a lot of other fellows who thought they

were having real sport and enjoying life that way. As I never had a taste for drink of any sort, probably I might take beer now and then—possibly stronger stuff—without acquiring an appetite. But what's the use when a fellow really doesn't care for it?"

"Not a bit of use, son—not a bit. You're right. Perhaps you could take it occasionally without suffering any harm; but it's certainly safer to let it alone. You've got the right idea."

"I had it pounded into my head quite recently," said Roger. "Some fellows are so dense that it takes a jolt to wake them up."

"Don't believe you were ever dense. I know what college life is for a young man who has money to blow, and he'd be mighty thin-blooded if he didn't touch a high spot now and then. It's only the no-goods who are really hurt for life in that fashion. The others profit by it, and some time they come to see just how little there really is in it. I've given my own boy plenty of rope, knowing he'd either hang himself or come out all right in the end. It's my theory that you can't coddle and pet a youngster and make a real man of him. He's got to see things, do things, get a taste of life, take the bitter with the sweet, then work out his own salvation. So you want to go back to college?"

"I want to," answered Roger seriously, "and I

mean to. Of course, I've got to earn my own way, and it will take time. I can wait on tables and do work of that sort if forced to it—and I will."

"Bully for you! Not many fellows put into your shoes would even contemplate anything like that. They would be too proud. They would feel themselves eternally disgraced by such menial work. Now, if you were forced to wait on tables, or do any sort of work of that order, and you stuck to it till you finished your education, you'd be all the more a man. Yes, you would. And nobody that wasn't a cad or a bounder would ever look down on you for it."

"I suppose," said Roger, "I might play summer baseball for money. I can pitch."

"But that would make you a professional. That would bar you from your varsity team."

"I don't know that I could make the varsity nine."

"But still you think you might. Well, now, son, don't you play professional baseball as long as you can see a chance to make the college nine. I'm not going to discuss the fairness of the rule which makes a college player a professional if he takes money for his playing, though I will say it's rotten hard on some of them. But you can get through without doing anything to bar you from college athletics."

"Thank you, Mr. Keating," said Roger feel-

ingly. "I'm glad you give me such encouragement."

"Then you have a taste for athletics, eh? I'd like to have seen my own boy go in for 'em. I tried to induce him, but it wasn't any use. Lots of people rail about athletics in colleges, but I claim that they are good for most of the men who take them up seriously and sensibly. They keep a fellow out of lots of mischief. They give him a chance to work off his surplus energy, and every healthy young chap has some to work off. A college man had better be playing baseball or football than to spend his spare time rounding it. There!" he finished, rising. "I feel better. Now, let's look over the racer, and see if any of those crooks have been tampering with her."

"I don't believe they would dare do anything to her as soon as this, Mr. Keating. Whatever they intended to do, if anything, would have been done shortly before the race, so there would be little chance of finding it out."

"That's good sense, son; but we'll look her over just the same, and if she's all right we'll take her out and go over the course. I'd like to do that, and you may be interested to see just what the course is like."

"I've been over it already several times. I did so with some friends not a month ago."

"Then you know something about it. Still, it

won't hurt to go round again, and it will give me a chance to see how the car works. You don't mind driving?"

"I'm more than glad of the chance."

Fifteen minutes later the Keating racer rolled out of the garage with Roger at the wheel. Cyrus Keating locked the doors behind him, and joined the young man.

"Now," he said, "you can send her round as fast as you please save in certain places, and I'll tell you where those are. To-morrow all speed restrictions will be off, of course; but to-day a driver must look out, though he'll be allowed to burn the road where there's no danger of collisions."

In a short time Roger was "burning the road." The car roared over the course like a tornado, and Keating found that Roger knew the places where the speed should be cut down. Nevertheless the young man took the open turns in a manner which made his companion's hair stand, although Keating kept his teeth set and made no objection. For all the slow running in certain places, the forty-mile course was covered in forty-three minutes. This meant that in places the car had done better than seventy.

When they whirled up to the garage and stopped, Keating stepped out, emitting a long, whistling breath.

"I don't believe I'd care to repeat," he confessed. "If you can do it to-day in forty-three, with a clear track and no restrictions I'll bet you can make it in thirty-five. I've watched you on the turns, and you handle a car right. I've got a proposition to make to you."

Roger got out, his heart thudding, more from the man's final words than because of the speed on the course.

"I've decided on something," said Keating quietly. "I don't care if Thurlow does send Dehasset down; I'm going to take a chance on you if you're ready to take a chance yourself."

"I'm ready!" exclaimed Roger.

"Then you'll drive the Keating in the race to-morrow."

Boltwood felt like giving a whoop of joy, but remained calm.

"You're going to drive," repeated Cyrus Keating; "and if you beat the Comet I'll give you three hundred dollars. If you win the race I'll double it."

"If I'm alive to-morrow night, and this car holds together on the course, you'll pay me three hundred, sure," said Roger. "I'm in hopes you'll have to make it six."

"So am I," said Keating.

CHAPTER XII

A POINT SETTLED

THURLOW kept his word. Shortly after two o'clock two mechanicians arrived at the Keating garage in Dempford, in charge of a young man named Powers from the New York salesrooms.

"You can depend on these men, Mr. Keating," said Powers. "Besides, I'm going to stay by the car every minute until the race starts—and you know me."

"Yes," said the manufacturer, "I know you. Don't let any one come poking around here. If Prowley or any of his bunch should show up, keep them out." He turned to Roger. "Come on!" he invited. "I'm going over to the hotel, where I have rooms engaged. It will do you good to stretch your legs a little."

Walking into town, they found the place full of life and bustle. This atmosphere was more pronounced around the hotel, which seemed to be the headquarters for automobile manufacturers, sporting men, curiosity seekers, and others drawn to the place by the coming big event. Keating was recognized and spoken to by many of these,

some of whom regarded Roger quizzically, as if wondering who he might be. On this point old Cyrus vouchsafed information to no one.

When he asked for the key to his rooms, Keating was informed by the clerk that there was a telephone call for him from the city, and the number proved to be that of the New York salesrooms.

"I reckon it's Thurlow," he said to Roger, as he entered a booth.

Through the glass of the booth door Boltwood saw Cyrus Keating talking vigorously into the telephone receiver. In a short time the elder man came out.

"Let's go upstairs," he suggested. "I'll tell you about it there."

A bell boy conducted them, and they entered a suite up one flight.

"Four rooms together," said Keating. "Two of them are for Tom and Doris. Mrs. Keating wouldn't think of coming. She saw one race in which there was a smash, and it cured her. I suppose the boy will be bringing his sister down some time this afternoon. Sit down."

Roger was too full of pent-up elation to care to sit down, but he did so while the manufacturer lighted a cigar and puffed at it nervously.

"It was Thurlow," said Keating suddenly between whiffs; "Thurlow called me on the phone. He wasn't able to get Dehasset, but he picked up

another man—Paul Lenares, who drove the Cranford at Los Angeles last month. Lenares is on the way here."

The manner in which this statement was made caused Roger some apprehension; but in spite of the impulse he refrained from suggesting, even by a question, that Keating, having cooled down after his whirl round the course, was regretting in the slightest degree his decision to let a man who was still in the class of amateurs drive for the Traymore Cup.

Old Cyrus took the cigar from his mouth and held it before him, regarding contemplatively the little curl of blue smoke rising from the lighted end. Again he spoke suddenly:

"I wouldn't let Lenares drive under any circumstances. He messed things frightfully at Los Angeles. He's no driver, and I don't see how he ever got a chance at it."

Roger's relief caused him to emit a long breath which he had been holding, and the sound of it led the man with the cigar to turn an almost jeering eye in his direction.

"So you thought that, did you?" snapped Cyrus Keating. "You thought I'd whiffle as quick as this? Had an idea, did you, that I didn't know my own mind?"

"Oh, no," protested the younger man, flushing; "but I fancied you might think you'd been led too

hastily into a decision about such an important matter."

"When I make up my mind, it's made up, son. Some folks claim I jump into things in a hurry; but they have discovered the fact that after I jump in it takes me a good long time to jump out. I'm a man of my word. If Thurlow should send Todd Orcott himself down here now to drive for us I wouldn't pull you off the car to give Orcott the place."

"That sounds good to me, Mr. Keating," laughed Roger, "and I believe it."

"Oh, we'll get acquainted by and by—we'll get acquainted, young man," half chuckled the manufacturer as he kicked a chair round and seated himself. "Of course you realize the chances you're taking by driving to-morrow. You're liable to be killed. If you should be, your old man would accuse me of murder. He's accused me of almost everything else already. But one thing is certain—he never got proof of downright crookedness or double-dealing in which I was concerned. I'm sorry to say—no, I'm glad—that I've got something on him."

"You mean Prowley's letter to Jasper Christy, the treasurer of the Comet Motor Car Company, I presume? Mr. Keating, whatever Christy may have done that's crooked, I refuse to believe that my father was a party to it."

"Huh! I shouldn't think you'd be so keen to stand up for your old man after the way he used you. It's possible he may not know precisely what sort of a job Christy's up to, but it isn't likely Christy would be doing anything of the sort without getting some encouragement from the head of the concern. It was easy enough for Hen Boltwood to say to Christy: 'Go ahead, but don't involve me even by letting me know what's doing.'"

"If my father was absolutely positive that anything crooked was being attempted by Christy, he'd never give him that much encouragement," asserted Roger loyally. "Whatever else may be said of him, Henry Boltwood is honest. As far as Christy is concerned, I've never seen much of him, but what I have seen has caused me to dislike him."

"As any honest man would. That's one reason why I suspect your father. No perfectly square man would want to be tied up with a yellow pup like Jasper Christy."

"Business makes queer bedfellows sometimes," said Roger, still striving to defend his father.

They talked in this manner for a short time; then Roger, unable to repress his restlessness, decided to return to the garage. Keating said he would be over later, and Boltwood left the hotel.

Reaching the garage, he found the mechani-

cians, directed by Powers, going over the racer in a minute inspection. At once he pulled off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and started to take part in this work.

"Hello!" said Powers. "What are you going to do? Who are you, anyhow?"

"I'm the driver."

"Hey? The driver! What driver?"

"The driver who is going to handle this car to-morrow."

Powers and the mechanicians stared at him incredulously.

"You!" said Powers, in total disbelief. "You! I saw you with the old man, but you'll have to spring that driving gag on some one else. It won't go with me."

"If you doubt me, send a man over to the hotel to ask Mr. Keating. He should have told you, but for some reason he didn't."

"I think we'll wait till Mr. Keating comes round."

"Then you've got another think coming to you," said Roger warmly. "I've been engaged to drive this car in the place of Prowley, and I propose to look it over personally. If you'll send a man to Mr. Keating, I'll wait till he comes back; but if you don't, and you try to keep me away from this car, you're going to have a jolly good scrap on your hands."

That he meant it there could be no doubt, and even the ready-to-fight manner of the mechanicians, who came round and joined Powers, did not seem to daunt him in the least. Observing this, and eying the splendid arms revealed by Boltwood's uprolled sleeves, Powers began to waver.

"I believe you would fight," he muttered. "Say, Jackson, run over to the hotel and ask Mr. Keating about this. It won't take you ten minutes. Now, Mr. Driver, while he's gone you might tell me how it happens that you're taking Prowley's place."

"I might," said Roger, "but I see no reason why I should. We'll simply wait for Jackson's return."

In less than ten minutes Jackson was back with the information that Roger Boltwood was the driver Keating had engaged.

"Boltwood!" exploded Powers. "Roger Boltwood! Why, that's the name of old Hen Boltwood's son!"

"Henry Boltwood is my father," said Roger calmly as he stepped forward to the racer and made ready to inspect it. Nor did he give the slightest heed to the continued wonderment of the trio, who now treated him with no small amount of respect and deference.

It was nearly four o'clock when Cyrus Keating reappeared at the garage, arriving some three

minutes ahead of a slender, dark man of twenty-eight or thirty, who whirled up to the doors at the wheel of a car, jumped out, and announced that he was Paul Lenares.

"Sorry, Lenares," said the head of the Keating company; "you're too late. I'd engaged a driver before Thurlow phoned me. You'll be paid for any trouble to which you've been put."

Lenares seemed bitterly disappointed, although he did not make much complaint. "It's my hard luck," he said. "It's still chasing me, but I'll shake the hoodoo yet." With which assertion he slowly got into his car and drove away.

Roger had finished, to his satisfaction, a thorough and minute inspection of the racer, had washed up, brushed his clothes, and donned his coat when still another car stopped at the garage door. In it, besides the driver, were four young people—Tom Keating and his companions last seen by Boltwood in the grillroom of the Mammoth.

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE GRILL

TOM came in gayly, followed by the others. "Here we are, governor!" he called. "Didn't know whether we'd find you here or not. How are things going? All ready for the—" He stopped short and glared at Roger in astonishment. "Why, hello, Boltwood!" he said, with a sudden distinctly superior, almost disdainful manner. "What are you doing around here? I'd as soon thought of seeing the old boy himself in a Keating garage."

"Boltwood is going to drive for us," explained Cyrus Keating.

"Eh!" grunted Tom, in a puzzled manner. "Drive for us? Chauffeur, hey? I heard he was up against hard luck, but I didn't suppose he'd come down to a chauffeur's job."

"He's going to drive the Keating in the race to-morrow."

"Wha-ut!" shouted Tom. "Drive in the race! You're joking. No, you never joke. Then you're plumb crazy."

Old Cyrus really seemed to enjoy his son's utter

astonishment. "I cracked open something decidedly rotten around here," he explained, "and fired the bunch of crooks that had planned to give us the double cross. Then I hired young Boltwood."

"But he's Hen Boltwood's son!" spluttered Tom. "You might as well hire his old man to drive. Besides, this isn't going to be a joy ride; it will be a real cup race. Where does he qualify for that?"

"He's qualified to my satisfaction; that settles it."

Now, Tom knew a thing was settled when his father spoke in such a manner; yet he continued to express his open disapproval. So open was he in his remarks that his sister, flushing with embarrassment because Roger could hear every word spoken, pulled at his elbow and whispered something in his ear.

"What do I care?" he growled. "Let him!" But he took his father's arm, and drew Mr. Keating over to one side of the garage, where he continued talking with vigor and heat, his words now and then rising fitfully until they reached Roger's ears. Needless to say, they were far from complimentary, although they seemed to make little impression on the elder man.

Evidently for the purpose of drowning these disagreeable remarks, Doris Keating chattered

with her two friends, and laughed with unusual loudness. Once—only once—she permitted her eyes to travel over young Boltwood from his tan-shod feet to the cap that crowned his well-shaped head. Roger was not looking at her, but he knew what she was doing; and, feeling that his measure was being taken, his cheeks tingled a little. He imagined she likewise regarded him with a touch of disdain that was not wholly devoid of pity.

The real truth was that at that moment Doris Keating was telling herself that Roger Boltwood was the handsomest man she had ever seen, and there was in her mind no atom of disdain or pity.

Roger fussed around the car while Tom remonstrated vainly with his inflexible father. In the end Cyrus Keating, becoming somewhat heated himself, cut the young man short in a way that admitted of no further words. Whereupon, with a shrug of his shoulders, Tom turned away.

"Come on, girls!" he said. "Come, Randall, old man, we'd better slide. I counted on enjoying the race to-morrow; but, as far as the Keating Kar is concerned, it's plain the affair will be a howling farce."

Of course these words were intended for Roger's ears, and naturally they gave him a thrill of deep indignation. He suppressed this emotion almost instantly, however, and stood gazing at

Tom's disdainful back as the latter strode out of the garage.

Randall and the two girls followed, and vainly Roger hoped that Doris would cast at least one fleeting backward glance in his direction. She did not look back, and a few minutes later the touring car carried her away.

"Well, son," said Cyrus Keating, his hand dropping on the new driver's shoulder, "everything's all right here. Powers will take care of this outfit, so you may as well come along back to the hotel and rest up. I was able to get a little cell of a room for you there, which was lucky, as it will give you a decent chance to sleep, and you'll need some rest, all right. The excitement of what's coming may have you stimulated so you don't feel as if you needed rest, but take my advice and sleep as long and as sound as you can tonight. Don't you mind what that excitable young cub of mine said."

"Oh, I don't mind," replied Roger. "It happens that we've never been the best of friends, and, under the circumstances, I suppose it's no more than natural for him to raise a howl about me."

As they walked away Roger glanced over his shoulder to observe the movements and bustle around the neighboring garages; then paused involuntarily to watch a roaring racer coming down

the stretch to the finish in a last tryout. The stir, the life, the tensity of it took hold of him powerfully; and the realization that he was now a part of all this—that to-morrow he would be one of the vital factors in an event a thousand times more thrilling and dangerous than the wildest, fiercest chariot race of old, instead of bringing a single fluttering qualm of fear, uplifted him with a deep, strength-giving joy.

And if he won the cup, six hundred dollars would take him back to Yale, now the goal of his ambition. It would scarcely carry him through a year's course, unless he economized in every possible way, and lived with all the frugality of a poverty-stricken student. But if he should go back with enough money in his pocket to meet immediate necessities he would find a way to make more money. Other students did it, fellows with no more resource or ability than himself, and what others could do, he told himself, he could do likewise. The first door was waiting for his hand to thrust it yawning wide, and he would force the others when he came to them.

He was so silent during the walk to the hotel that Mr. Keating half wondered if it could be possible that apprehension had gripped him. But when the man began to talk of the danger of driving in such a race Roger cut him short with a free-and-easy laugh.

"Danger?" he said. "To win the prize you've offered me, I'd go into it if I knew the danger were tenfold greater. You don't know what it means to me, sir. I've simply got to win the race."

Reassured, Keating smiled and nodded. "A man who feels that way, and can drive the way you can, ought to win with a winning car. You've got the car."

"Then I'll get the cup," vowed Roger.

At the hotel, though Keating suggested that they dine together later, Roger made excuses, well knowing that he might, were he to accept, be led into another unpleasant meeting with the manufacturer's son.

When the time came to eat he descended into the café adjoining the bar, where a waiter conducted him to the one unoccupied table. It chanced that this placed him close to the grillework which divided the dining room of the café from the public bar beyond, and at his immediate right was the door by which patrons passed from one place to the other.

His seat enabled him to survey the crowded tables at which men sat eating, drinking, smoking, and talking, almost the sole topic of their conversation being the race. Here the sporting element which followed such events had assembled, and, having seen a bit of such sporting life, Roger rec-

ognized among them a few notorious characters of the sort who invariably followed up such events.

In discussing the capabilities of the cars and the qualifications of their drivers, these men seemed amazingly well informed. In their midst, however, for some reason, Roger Boltwood felt decidedly out of place. He knew that the real solid men of the automobile business who chanced to be stopping at the hotel would take dinner in the dining room above, and there under different circumstances he himself might be at this minute.

Listening, he observed that among these sporting men the entrance of the Echo for the cup seemed to be regarded as a joke, and in attempting a jest one man expressed his belief that all anybody would ever hear of the car after the race was over would be "a decidedly faint echo." There were others—the Silent Hood and the Morgan in particular—which were held in scarcely more esteem by these men. The three cars of first caliber, on which opinions plainly were divided, were the Ranco, the Comet, and the Keating; and among the majority the Comet was distinctly the favorite.

Behind Roger the voices of the crowding patrons at the bar came drifting through the grillework. Suddenly one with a shrill nasal tone loudly announced that the Keating was practically out of the race. Immediately he seemed besieged

by others, who demanded to know his reason for such an assertion.

"The Keating people have lost their driver," said the shrill-voiced man. "Prowley's out of it for some reason, and he's drinking like a fish. He says that the Keating hasn't any show in the world."

"Prowley out of it!" boomed a hoarse voice. "Then who in thunder have they got to drive?"

Nobody seemed able to answer this question, and Roger, beginning on his soup, smiled to himself.

The smile faded from his face as he observed three young men who had descended from above and were coming toward him across the room, evidently on their way to the bar. Two of them were Tom Keating and Charlie Randall; and somewhere they had picked up Jack Dolliver. Keating perceived Roger, and gazed at him stonily as he passed into the bar. Randall did not seem to notice Boltwood, but Roger was sure Dolliver had spied him, though the last-mentioned man kept his eyes averted as he walked by the table.

"A fair-weather friend, Jack," murmured Roger to himself. "You've shown what you are, all right."

He knew that after entering the bar the trio had taken a position at his back, just beyond the

grillework; for their conversation came, clear and distinct, to his ears.

"He's not such a bad driver, you know, Keat," Randall was saying.

"Bad!" sneered Tom Keating. "I don't know of any worse. Any chump can hang onto a steering wheel and punch a throttle wide open. That's about all Rog Boltwood ever did. Look at his smashes."

"He's had smashes, all right," agreed Dolliver. "I ought to know, for I was in the last one."

"And it's a wonder," said Tom, "that you're here to tell of it. The chances of such a man coming through the race to-morrow are mighty slim. It's a ten-to-one shot he'll pile up the Keating and be killed."

"Trying to get my goat, are you?" mused Roger, in disdainful amusement. "You know I can hear you, Keating, and you think you're going to jar my nerve."

At this moment the shrill-voiced man recognized Cyrus Keating's son, pushed forward, and questioned him about the Keating driver.

"Who is to fill Prowley's place?" he asked.

"Nobody," was the answer. "The old man has been hit by paresis, and he's got a green dub to drive."

"Who is he?"

"Son of Hen Boltwood."

There were a dozen exclamations of astonishment, and the shrill-voiced man ventured to doubt Tom's statement.

"Why, Henry Boltwood is the Comet maker," he squealed. "You don't mean to tell us that your father has hired Boltwood's son to drive the Keating?"

"Didn't I say the old man had a touch of paresis?" sneered Tom.

"I don't see how it happened."

"Well, it happened because old Boltwood has kicked his son out of doors without a penny to his name, and the fellow has got to do something."

"I'll bet on the Comet!" burst forth the shrill-voiced man.

"Go to it!" advised Tom. "And you've got every chance to win. I'm going to bet on the Comet myself. The race will be between that car and the Ranco."

"Will it?" murmured Roger, attacking his dinner with a healthy appetite. "Bet on it—bet your heads off."

In a few minutes, having obtained their drinks, the trio of young men reappeared and sauntered through the café, all of them laughing in a manner probably intended to irritate Roger, although they did not look at him.

Boltwood was at his dessert when some one stopped beside the table and spoke:

"Well, say, old pal, I hear you're goin' to be one of der real gazabos to-morrer. Congratulations. I wish yer luck."

It was Suggs—Suggs with an open, friendly hand extended—a hand which Roger promptly grasped.

CHAPTER XIV

THE AMBUSH

FOR all Cyrus Keating's admonition, Roger did not feel like going to bed early. He had never been troubled with the slightest touch of indigestion, but he decided to give the hearty meal time to settle. For a time he chatted with Suggs, who was full of approval and encouragement, and finally, to get away from the somewhat stifling and feverish atmosphere of the hotel, he walked out alone.

His steps carried him beyond the border of the town to a point near the course, from which he could see, nearly a mile away, the garages of the competing cars, some of them still agleam with light. There was a low, thin moon, and the night was warm and delightful. From the slope of a tree-dotted hillside Roger beheld a few scattered fires gleaming irregularly along the border of the course, where some premature arrivals were bivouacking in the open. Faint and softened by the distance, the sound of several voices, singing "I Want to Be in Dixie," drifted to his ears. The glamour of the night, the thrall of the time and place, the immensity of this tremendous modern-

day contest in which he was to play a part, seeped into his youthful blood and gave him a feeling akin to that which doubtless inspired the knights of King Arthur's day.

It must not be presumed that youthful folly or recklessness blinded him to the perils he was to pass through. He knew the chances he must take, and he realized that those chances made it doubtful, even improbable, that the race could be finished without the sacrifice of human life. But in him was the confidence, the abiding belief in himself and his purpose, which has inspired patriots and martyrs in worthy causes. Men thus inspired are strangers to fear.

A little whispering breeze came up and fanned his face, causing him to push his cap back on his head that the soft night air might touch his brow. He was picturing to himself the scene of to-morrow, the throb, the thrill, the glory of it, when something like a stealthy footstep behind him caused him to start—to whirl round.

Perhaps that movement saved him a fractured skull, for a club in the hands of Bill Prowley smote him glancingly, with sufficient force to send him down upon all fours. His cap, too, had aided in breaking the impact of the blow.

Prowley was not alone. With four companions, he had dogged Roger, and now, leaping on the half-stunned man, he snarled to them to give a hand.

They rushed in, all of them, seeking to beat Boltwood down when he attempted to rise.

Beset as Roger was, and taken at such a tremendous disadvantage, there was not one chance in a thousand that he could effectively resist those ruffians alone and single-handed.

"I said I'd git yer!" growled Prowley, clinging to the young man's back and reaching round with his powerful fingers to grip his windpipe. "I said I'd git yer—and I've got yer!"

The man's crushing claws dug into Boltwood's throat as if they would tear his windpipe out, and, with everything swimming, he felt himself being driven down flat upon the turf. Then something happened.

There was a sound of thudding feet, a commotion, smashing blows, cries of alarm, imprecations —and Roger breathed again.

The weight of human bodies upon him had quickly diminished, and the choking hand was gone from his throat. Catching his breath with a painful wheeze, he struggled to his knees, and looked around.

Two men were down, one of them rolling and grunting, while the other slowly dragged himself back to his feet. Four other men were fighting like demons, three against one, the latter being the unknown who had hurled himself into the affair barely in time to save the intended victim.

The spectacle roused Roger Boltwood thoroughly and amazingly. With a cry, he sprang up and joined the unrecognized friend who was battling against odds in his behalf.

It chanced that Prowley was the first man he reached. He recognized the revengeful driver by the faint light of the sickle moon, and, with a tremendous throb of satisfaction, he beat down the ruffian's guard and smashed him twice full in the face. The second blow seemed to reach Prowley even as he was falling, and it sent him flying head over heels down the slope into some bushes below.

With their leader put out of the fight in this manner, the remaining thugs became disheartened instantly, and took to their heels. Roger's yet unrecognized friend pursued one of them, and kicked him headlong into the bushes which hid Prowley. The one who had been groaning and trying to rise promptly rolled over and over down the bank, while the flying footsteps of the other two grew fainter as he fled.

Roger stood panting, the fingers of one hand feeling of his scalp, while the other hand rubbed his scratched and aching throat.

"I'm much obliged to you, whoever you are," he said. "If you hadn't jumped in just when you did they would surely have polished me off properly."

"I was just a bit slow, pal," said a familiar voice. "They got at yer quicker'n I expected."

"Suggs!" exclaimed Roger, making a spring and grabbing the man by the shoulder. "So it's you! I have to thank you for saving me from a beating that would have put me out of the race."

"Never mind the thanks," chuckled the big man. "I happened to hear a couple of them blokes talkin' private, and, while they didn't mention no names, I kinder suspicioned who they was layin' for. Then, when another one come and give them the word, and the three hiked off to join two more that was dogging somebody out this way, I decided to pike along and mix in just for the sport of the thing. It wasn't much of a scrap, after all, was it?" he finished, with a ludicrous inflection of disappointment.

"Not much for you, but I got about all I care for," admitted Roger.

"That was because they took yer foul. Hurt much?"

"I don't think I'm hurt at all. I was hit by a club, I reckon, but my cap and the fact that I heard something and started to dodge saved me from a split scalp, at least. I've got a bump on my head, but it doesn't seem to be bleeding."

"You know who the ginks was, I judge?"

"One of them was Prowley, the crooked driver discharged by Keating. He put up the job. He's

down there in the bushes now, and I'm going to nab him—"

"Don't believe you will, Boltwood," said Suggs, pointing. "I seen one of them three break out of the bushes and hike a minute ago, and there goes the other two. If you say so, we'll run 'em down."

"Let them go," decided Roger. "I recognized Prowley, and if I choose to do so I can swear out a warrant for him. Suggs, I'll remember this, and if my chance ever comes—"

"Forget it—forget it!" interrupted the big fellow. "All I'm sorry about is that the fun was over so quick."

Together they walked back to the hotel, where, after a time, Roger sought his room, and retired to obtain the rest he needed.

Strangely enough, just as loneliness had borne heavily upon him in his Harlem room twenty-four hours ago, peace and a sense of triumph now kept him company; and, for all the great event to which he would awaken in the morning, he slept soundly and well.

CHAPTER XV

UNBENDING WILL

THE day of the race gave birth to "as fine a morning as ever lay outdoors." The sun came up over the rim of the world, and rose into a sky of deep and perfect blue, unflawed by the tiniest cloud. The airs were still, and save for the surging movements of men everything seemed to be waiting, hushed, for some mighty event.

All through the latter part of the night monsters of iron and steel, with glaring eyes that pierced the darkness, and shrieking, bellowing voices that made it shiver, came pouring into Dempford by all the roads converging there, bearing loads of human beings, all eager to taste as spectators the whirlwind thrill and throb of the race, which must set vibrating the most jaded nerves.

After daybreak the principal roads leading down from New York became, near Dempford, so congested that these monsters could barely creep along at a man's walking pace, lifting into the air little, winding trails of dust, which marked the course of the highways as far as the eye could reach.

With dawn came also the special trains, disgorging great crowds at the little station, from which they poured through the streets of the town in haste to find places of vantage in the stands or along the stretches of the course. And—a strange commentary on human reasoning—although at least half of these people were aware of the perils attending such a race, and perhaps came morbidly hopeful that they might witness tragedy that day, all the hundreds of guards secured by the management to hold them in check would not be able to prevent them from dashing on to the course in the track of other racers should a car be smashed before their eyes. Just as an unrestrained crowd unwittingly courts death at an aviation meet, hundreds of these, like brainless cattle, would court it by crowding the course or swarming upon it if an accident occurred.

Cyrus Keating appeared early at the garage, and found Roger there ahead of him.

"You're looking fit, Boltwood," said the manufacturer, after surveying the young driver. "Don't look like you'd worried yourself out of sleep last night."

"I slept like a baby, Mr. Keating," said Roger. "I don't think I dreamed at all, and I never felt better in my life than I do this morning."

"Good! As it was something new to you, I was

afraid it might have you tossing and turning. How's everything here?"

"Everything's all right, Mr. Keating," said Powers, coming up. "Not a flicker out of the way last night. Quiet as it could be."

Roger did not tell of the attack upon him by Prowley and his pals. The bump on his head was still sore, but it gave him no pain, and he was practically unconscious of its existence.

Keating consulted a moment with Powers; then he called one of the mechanicians—a quiet, steady-looking man of thirty-five—and introduced him to Roger.

"This is Matt Shea, Boltwood," he said. "Shea will be your partner in the race. I fixed it for you with the committee last night, and your name is on the list as one of the regular drivers."

Roger shook hands with Shea, and was pleased with the firm, steady grip the man gave him and the way he looked one straight in the eye.

"Shea," he said, as Cyrus Keating turned again to Powers and began talking briskly, "we're going after that cup, and I think we've got the car to win it. It depends on us."

"I'm ready to do my part, sir," declared the sober Irishman quietly.

"We'll make sure personally," said Roger, "that we've got the proper tires, tubes, tools, and

everything we should carry for repairs which may be needed on the course. I know Powers has attended to all these things, but I'll feel easier after we've gone over everything."

It was a time calculated to make men feverish, but in that garage there were two who showed no signs of unusual disturbance—Roger Boltwood and Matt Shea. An uninformed observer might have imagined them little concerned in the outcome of the day.

Keating had seen that the new driver was properly supplied with the needed togs, and Roger looked decidedly businesslike when an automobile containing members of the racing committee pulled up at the garage to make inquiries.

"We're all ready here," announced Cyrus Keating. "We'll come up to the scratch in our turn, all right."

The Keating Kar had drawn position number six, and the numeral stood forth in white paint upon the radiator and the sides of the hood.

"Henry Boltwood has made a protest," said one of the committeemen.

Roger turned quickly as he heard the words, and stepped out toward the touring car.

"A protest?" questioned Keating. "What sort of a protest?"

"Against your driver—against his son driving your car."

"Upon what grounds has my father protested?" asked Roger.

"He has forbidden us to permit it. Here he comes now."

A runabout containing Henry Boltwood whirled up and stopped. Boltwood lifted himself ponderously from the seat and stepped out. His face was dark and grim, his manner determined.

"What the devil do you mean by this business, Keating?" he demanded gruffly.

"I beg your pardon, sir," snapped Keating in return. "What business are you referring to?"

"The engaging of my son to drive in this race. He shan't do it. I forbid it."

"What authority have you to forbid it?"

"I'm his father. He's in no position to disobey me."

"Pardon me, father," said Roger, stepping forward promptly. "I scarcely see how you can make such a statement, considering all the circumstances. By your own act, you've left me unbeholden to you in any way. You cast me out to shift for myself."

"But still I have authority over you. You're my son, and—"

"Twenty-one years of age to-day. Your authority over me has come to an end, father."

"You were engaged by Keating yesterday, when

I did have authority," said the elder Boltwood, with surprising feebleness.

"Yesterday and to-day are two different days."

"If the young man is of age, Mr. Boltwood," said one of the committeemen, "I'm afraid your protest won't amount to much."

Henry Boltwood turned again to Cyrus Keating, lifting one of his ponderous fists and shaking it threateningly. "It's crooked!" he roared. "Crooked as blazes! But I suppose it's just what I might expect from you."

"Stop—stop right where you are!" snapped Keating fiercely. "Don't talk to me about crookedness, Boltwood. I've got the goods on you, and got them in my pocket. If ever there was a crooked job put up in a race of this kind, the one in which you—"

It actually seemed that Boltwood would assault Keating then and there, and Roger held himself ready to leap between the two men.

"Why, blame you!" raged the Comet manufacturer. "Do you dare insinuate that I've been concerned in anything crooked?"

"I make no insinuations I can't back up, Boltwood. If you think I do, just ask Jasper Christy about his dealings with Bill Prowley. Oh, you're pretty slick, getting traitors into my garage here —on to the racer. But, slick as you are, two can

play at that game. I may have had an emissary in your very office."

"Gentlemen! Gentlemen!" expostulated a committeeman. "Do you realize what you're saying? Do you realize that such charges, formally made, would demand an investigation and proof? Do you mean to make formal charges, Keating?"

"No," was the prompt answer; "not unless Boltwood forces my hand. I spoiled the rotten trick in time, and I'm going to be satisfied to beat the Comet to-day. The Keating is going to beat the Comet, too—with Boltwood's own son at the Keating wheel."

"Charges! He don't dare make charges!" blustered Henry Boltwood. "It's a bluff—nothing else."

"A bluff that I'll back up to the bitter end if you press me too hard," flung back Keating. "Before you pronounce it a bluff, just ask your man Christy about his correspondence with Bill Prowley. Ask him, if you please, if there happens to be any of that correspondence missing."

"This sounds pretty rotten, gentlemen," remarked the spokesman of the committee. "It's liable to kick up a bad odor. Better be careful."

Henry Boltwood choked. "Christy—he—if he has— I don't know anything about it. I don't believe it."

The Keating manufacturer snapped his fingers. "Believe it or not, but don't make any more big talk until you've questioned Christy a little."

Henry Boltwood turned suddenly to his son. "Roger," he said, "I want you to listen to me. It isn't that I'm afraid of you as a driver, but I know the chances you're taking, and I don't want to see you killed."

"I appreciate that much consideration on your part, father," was the quiet reply; "but you must realize that it was you who drove me into this."

"How much is this man Keating paying you to drive? Whatever it is, I'll give you double the amount not to drive. Now you can't say I've forced you into it."

"What kind of a man do you think I am, father?" flared Roger, his face flaming, his bearing that of outraged indignation. "Do you think I'm the sort of yellow dog who would go back on my employer now even if you were to offer me a hundred times the money I'll make by driving? If such a remote idea ever entered your head, dismiss it this instant. I've pledged myself to drive for Cyrus Keating, and, having made that pledge, I'd drive if I knew I'd never receive a dollar for the work."

The purple flush died out of Henry Boltwood's face, leaving it almost ashen. He made no attempt to plead with Roger, no further effort to

influence him, for in that moment he had come to realize that his own iron, inflexible will had been imparted to his son. Before the eyes of them all he seemed to shrivel and shrink amazingly. Twice he attempted to speak, but only inarticulate sounds gurgled in his throat. Then, like one smitten a staggering blow, he swung round slowly, walked to the runabout, got in, and was driven away.

CHAPTER XVI

TRAGEDY'S DARK WING

THE hour had come. The minute had arrived. The big Keating racer had been trundled out into the open, and a man stood ready at the starting crank. Roger Boltwood, in leather garments, helmet, and goggles, was pulling on his gloves preparatory to taking his position at the wheel. The main stand at the starting and finishing line was loaded to its utmost capacity with excited human beings, who now seemed hushed for the moment with a sort of breathless tenseness.

Cyrus Keating, standing near Roger, pulled out his split-second watch and looked at it. "The Ranco has first position," he said. "They'll send her off in half a minute."

The firing of a manifold-denuded motor came to their ears.

Powers gripped Roger's elbow, and slapped him on the back. "Remember what I've told you, old chap," he said. "You won't have to worry about any cars except the Comet and the Ranco. Don't let any one crowd you on the Bayville double

curve, and watch your skidding on the turn beyond Chesterbrook Bridge. Something will happen there to the first careless driver who takes the turn at high speed. Now go out there and eat 'em up."

The report of a pistol came from the starting point, and instantly the roar of the Ranco's cylinders burst upon the ear like the firing of a machine gun. It was answered by a tremendous roar of human voices sufficient to thrill a mummy. That roar ran away into the distance as the Ranco shot down the long, straight stretch from the starting line.

"Five minutes yet," said Cyrus Keating, "then your turn comes, son."

Roger was as cool as an early April morning. Not by a single tremor, action, or word did he betray any strain upon his nerves. Listening, he heard the second pistol shot, which sent the Silent Hood barking away on the trail of the Ranco.

"The Comet goes next," he said. "She's running out now. Myers will be the man to beat in this race, as far as drivers are concerned. He doesn't know what fear means."

The Comet was off on the moment; then followed the Morgan and the Prince. While the crowd thundered its encouragement to the driver of the fifth car, the Keating started forth to take its position. Never in all his remembrance had Roger Boltwood felt more elated, more filled to

the brim with joy of life, yet his apparent calmness amazed even the mechanician at his side.

The hoarsely shouting spectators grew silent as they surveyed the youthful driver of the car that had rolled into position for the start. From out of that silence came from somewhere a voice Roger could not mistake:

"You're der candy kid, Bolt! Go after dat bunch of lemons, and put 'em to der mat!"

"Suggs!" thought Roger, ready to let in his clutch, ready to punch open the accelerator. "Suggs, the pug—a real man!"

The starter's hand went up, the sun glittering on the pistol. Roger meshed his gears, and was ready for instant action. The pistol spoke, and the grip of the clutch, let in instantly, caused the Keating to jump forward, its cylinders spitting fire with a sudden tremendous roar. With a double movement Roger went through the gears into direct drive, and reached racing speed thirty seconds after leaving the line. Such a leap into action was, of course, a tremendous strain on the car, but the Keating had been built for just such treatment, and nothing gave way. It was afterward remarked by many spectators who watched Boltwood's "get off" that no racing driver with years of experience had ever done the trick with more unfaltering certainty or in handsomer style.

Down the long, straight road, shining black with oil, the roaring, throbbing racer went tearing in pursuit of its valiant rivals.

Trees, fences, houses, and lines of shouting people seemed rushing backward on either hand. There was some vibration to tell that the blazing engine was doing its work with a full, high flood of life, but the sensation quickly became that of skimming along above the road and barely touching it now and then. A tremendous wind rose, and beat into the faces of Boltwood and Shea. The miles were put behind them at the speed of the fastest express train.

First came the Chesterbrook Bridge, with the dangerous curve beyond it, and Shea, preparing to throw his body far out as a balance weight, wondered if they would take that curve or go tearing through the fence on the outer side to climb the bank beyond.

The bridge gave back a "roop" as they shot over it. They were on the curve, and the mechanician, holding fast and thrusting himself far toward the inner side of the road, realized that they skidded.

How to skid at great speed without a spill or a smash is an art which every racing driver must acquire. He must be prepared to do the right thing when he skids at unexpected times, and he must look forward to almost certain skids at

known places on the ordinary course. Roger had expected to skid on that turn, and therefore he was fully prepared when the thing happened. A driver of less skill, hitting the spot at a speed not exceeding fifty miles an hour, would doubtless have whirled completely round, and found himself heading the other way; or, if less lucky, would have side-swiped the fence and turned turtle. When neither of these things happened, Shea, swinging back to his seat, felt his confidence in Boltwood rise one hundred per cent.

"Good work there!" thought Shea exultantly. "The old man said he could drive. I'm beginning to believe it. If he makes the Bayville double without accident this time, I'll be ready to ride with him through anything."

Almost before they realized it, they were ripping through the roped-off and guarded main street of a little town, upon which, during the time of the race, no vehicle of any sort save the racing cars would be permitted. The open windows of the houses were choked with human beings hanging out and shrieking at them. Other human beings had found places of vantage on roofs and in trees. Telephone poles bore people clinging like leeches to the iron climbing spikes.

In a twinkling they were again in the open country. Then came the Bayville double curve, where Shea threw the weight of his body first to

one side, then to the other, as far as he could without interfering with the driver. To the mechanician's astonishment and admiration, they scarcely seemed to skid at all as they made that S-like twist.

"You're the goods, old man!" shouted Shea, his voice unheard by Roger above the roaring of the motor and the shriek of the air. "Let her go!" And Shea was regarded by those who knew him well as a cold-blooded, unemotional Irishman, something of a human paradox.

Forty miles they covered, and came tearing like a tornado over the starting line for the second round of the course without even glimpsing any other car. Behind them two more racers had started, but Roger did not fear that either the Echo or the Calvin would overtake him. The Prince was ahead, having got off only one minute in advance of the Keating, and in that forty miles the latter had not overtaken No. 5.

On the second lap Boltwood went out with the intention of setting the Prince back a notch before he came round again. Suddenly, as they swooped through a small grove, and almost bounded over a tiny hill, Roger saw the car he was after. It seemed, almost, that the Keating saw the other racer, for it spurted as a mettlesome horse spurts upon a track. In short order Boltwood could taste the light dust picked up by the whirling

wheels of the Prince. Into it he forged, and alongside. Just before Chesterbrook Bridge was reached the Prince dropped behind.

"One of 'em!" counted Shea. "Four more to get. We'll get 'em."

They took the curve beyond the bridge even better than they had on the first lap, and Roger went out in search of No. 4, the Morgan. Just before entering the little village they roared past the Morgan, held up by tire trouble.

"Now it's the Comet!" yelled Shea, the words torn from his lips by what seemed to be a raging wind.

The Comet! Roger knew the Comet had got away in third position, and he felt a deep thrill of joy as he yearned for the struggle that should decide whether the Comet or the Keating had the greater speed. At every opportunity, when he dared lift his eyes on a straight stretch, he looked for the Comet, but not until they had entered the last ten miles of the second lap was he rewarded by perceiving a little swirl of dust and the rear end of a flying car.

Shea worked the oil pump. "Get her!" he shrieked, all his reputed stolidness swept away by the blood-firing thrill of it.

It was fairly in front of the packed main stands that Roger fought it out with the other car. At the starting line they were practically side by side,

and the shrieking, goggle-eyed multitude of human beings went crazy with enthusiasm.

"Got you!" was Roger's muffled cry, as he perceived that the Keating was creeping into the lead despite every effort of its rival. "This settles the question as far as you're concerned, barring accidents."

But when he had forged past, Shea leaned close, and yelled into his ear:

"The Hood—the Silent Hood!"

It was not the Comet after all. In that eighty miles the Comet had passed car No. 2, the Silent Hood, and was now in second position, unless it had passed the Ranco also.

Before they again arrived at Chesterbrook Bridge they came crawling up on three other cars, which were bunched in a remarkable manner—crawling up at a speed of more than seventy miles an hour! Two of the cars were fighting it out like demons, while the third hung on close behind. That third Roger perceived was the Calvin, which, starting as No. 8, had therefore fallen back in the race. Just now, however, the Calvin was sticking to the two leaders in a way that proved her to possess speed, if nothing else.

Over the bridge they leaped, and the Keating engaged the Calvin on one of the most dangerous places of the course, the slippery curve.

The Calvin had the inside, and Roger attempted

to shoot past. They struck the curve, and in a twinkling the Calvin was forcing the Keating up against the outside fence.

Catastrophe rose and grinned. Disaster reached out its deadly hand for Boltwood and Shea.

Roger was forced to shut off all power, for he dared not apply the brakes. The Calvin skidded across with her rear wheels missing the front wheels of the Keating by barely a foot.

Shea swore roundly. Not a sound came from Boltwood's lips, but his jaws were set, with the muscles standing out taut and hard upon them.

Having foiled the Keating's attempt to pass at that curve, the Calvin shot ahead, and opened up the distance between them. Roger went after it, and did his best to get by before the Bayville double curve was reached. He gained a little steadily, but far too slowly to accomplish his purpose; and almost together, after swooping through Mapleton, they entered the double curve.

Here again tragedy hovered and threatened. Here again the Calvin—without skidding this time—forced Boltwood to relax a little or be smashed. Even while his mind and his hands were occupied in handling the powerful racer, Boltwood thought of something that added to the boiling heat of his blood.

Inadvertently, a week or two before leaving

home, he had become aware of a fact carefully hidden from the general public. He had learned that negotiations were being made quietly for a consolidation of the Comet and the Calvin concerns. The Comet had a car of both stamina and speed; the Calvin had speed, but had never stood up under abuse. Roger had wondered why his father cared to make such a consolidation, but now, recalling the statement of Cyrus Keating that the Comet Motor Car Company needed more capital, a sudden light dawned upon him. The people behind the Calvin concern were powerful in the financial world, and a consolidation with them would bring to Henry Boltwood and his associates all the ready money they could possibly require.

"Still," thought Roger, "I don't want to believe that my father would be concerned in any arrangement by which the Calvin would foul the Keating to give the Comet a better chance to win this race. He wouldn't do it. But Christy—Christy might!"

Like a bulldog he had hung close to the Calvin through the double curve. Beyond it he saw his opportunity. The troublesome car, seeking to bother him, had forged to the outside of the course. The inside was opened wide, and into the gap Roger drove the Keating, forcing her to the last notch. Before the Calvin driver was aware of it, the Keating was alongside.

That settled it. The Calvin held on for a few minutes, but found it impossible to keep up the pace. Slowly she dropped behind.

The Ranco and the Comet were still fighting it out only a short distance ahead. Suddenly the Ranco wabbled, and its pace slackened. A tire had blown out, and as the Ranco stopped for repairs the Comet went flying into the lead.

"You'll be eating my dust inside of twenty miles, at most," thought Roger.

CHAPTER XVII

THE AWFUL HAZARD

THE speed-mad thousands were howling like lunatics as the two mighty racing cars fought it out past the main stands, and went thundering into the long, straight stretch beyond. Whatever could be said of Myers, who drove the Comet, he was at least an honest racer with no desire to win at the cost of a rival's life. He had a slight advantage, but he gave the Keating every chance upon that stretch.

For a time it did not seem that Roger could pass, but he knew he must pass before the Chesterbrook curve was reached, or drop behind. Delicately, and with the highest and rarest sort of judgment, he manipulated spark and throttle. A hair, only a hair of change, then he saw that he was gaining. Myers tried for more speed and failed. When Shea attempted to shout for joy, the cry was driven back into his throat by the rushing wind. Little by little the Keating crept past. A foot, a yard, two yards she forged into the lead. When Chesterbrook Bridge was reached she had two good car lengths.

They struck the curve too hard, but Boltwood's steady nerves and wonderful judgment saved them, and they left it behind still on their wheels, with everything working perfectly. Roger knew he had first position; the task was now to hold it.

On the second sweep of the Bayville double curve he caught a glimpse of the first tragedy of the day. The Echo was piled up at the roadside, having left the course, cut down a tree, and wrapped itself in shattered fragments around another. A crowd had gathered around it, and some foolish ones were on the road, but Roger got past without hitting any one.

Not until the race was over did he learn that the Echo's driver had been instantly killed, while the mechanician had marvelously escaped with only a few scratches.

Like a man of iron Boltwood drove, wondering if anything would happen to the Keating, and beginning to believe that nothing would. He lost all track of the laps, and not until he again came upon the Calvin was he bothered.

This time the driver of the Calvin proved his foulness, as well as his folly, by crowding Boltwood on an open stretch. The thing was done wretchedly, and Roger was forced in a moment to the very border of the road, with his opponent still pushing him over.

There was an opening between some trees, and,

as his only chance, Boltwood left the course and shot into it. For a few seconds he was on grass ground, but behind him something had happened; and, twisting, he wheeled sharply to the left, flashed back across the narrow ditch, and regained the roadway.

Yes, something had happened behind him. The treacherous driver of the Calvin had misjudged the course in his mad effort to put the Keating out of the running. Roger had saved himself, but the Calvin, deflected, perhaps, by some trivial thing, found no clear road when it shot off the course. A tree trunk tore away one of the wheels, and the car went bottom up.

There is a saying that Satan protects his own. In this case the Calvin driver was thrown clear of the wreckage, and merely stunned. The mechanician, partly caught beneath the overturned racer, sustained a broken leg.

To Boltwood many hours seemed to pass, and still he roared on round and round that forty-mile course. He was so covered with dirt and grime that his most intimate acquaintances could not have recognized him. Nevertheless, not for a fleeting breath did his nerve falter, his eye fail, or his steady hands relax.

But he was not to get through without misfortune of any sort. Suddenly he realized that the car was misfiring in one cylinder, at least. It was

necessary to do something, and he threw the clutch and crowded on the brakes.

"Plug!" screamed Shea. "Plug trouble, I'll guarantee."

They leaped out. The troublesome cylinder was located in a twinkling, and in another twinkling Shea was twisting out the plug to replace it with a duplicate.

In that brief time Roger took a quick look at the tires. "Good Lord!" he groaned. "The rear left-hand shoe is half flat. It's going down. We've got a puncture, Shea!"

They had ripped the shoe off, found the cause of lost inflation, and were putting on another tire when the Comet thundered past them, and went blazing triumphantly into the distance. Neither spoke. The shoe was made ready, and they leaped back into their positions. The engine fired perfectly when started, showing that Shea had properly diagnosed the trouble.

"Now!" yelled the Irishman, as he worked the oil pump. "Get after the Comet again! We've got to trim her."

"We will!" said Roger.

The Ranco came threatening up behind them before they could get under the highest headway, but, while giving the challenger every fair chance, Roger simply declined to let it go by. They swooped past other cars limping and helplessly

beaten. The race for first position, as the wise ones had predicted, was now wholly between the Ranco, the Keating, and the Comet.

True, the Comet was again leading, but it had started three minutes ahead of the Keating, and Roger felt confident, if no further accident happened to his car, that the machine of the Boltwood Company could not come anywhere near finishing sufficiently far in advance to take first place. The Ranco, with six minutes to make up, seemed to be relegated to third position.

But Roger had no intention, if he could prevent it, of allowing the Comet to finish first, even though it should fail to do so by the necessary lead of three minutes' time. He was driving like a fiend as they raged past the main stand, and there Shea, catching the signal, managed to make him understand that they had entered the last lap of the race.

There were forty miles in which to overtake and pass the Comet.

In the straight stretches Roger pushed the Keating to its last hair notch, and on the curves he let up just barely enough to take them without smashing. Yet his judgment and skill were such that by an eyelash flicker he held to the margin of safety.

Shea swayed his body outward as a balance weight, and pumped oil by turns. Not even when

they came bellowing out of the Bayville double and caught the Comet's dust did the Irishman betray excitement. Perhaps he had worked off his emotions in the earlier stages of the great struggle, for now he, like Boltwood, seemed a mere mechanical part of the throbbing racer.

Less than nineteen miles lay between them and the finishing line, and the Keating, handled magnificently, was doing its utmost. For a time there was nothing to indicate that they were gaining, but in the last five-mile stretch they began to see through the dust the rear of the Comet. Nearer and still nearer they forged, but still it appeared that the Comet, though beaten for the cup, would finish ahead of them.

Neither Boltwood nor Shea knew anything of the mad excitement of the spectators who watched them swoop past like a tornado in the effort to cut the Comet down. They were watching the gas tank of the rival car, and seeing it slowly—oh, so slowly!—become plainer and more distinct through the veil of dust.

Less than a quarter of a mile from the finishing point the Comet threw a forward shoe. It wabbled, writhed, bucked, went over!

All the guards at that point of the course were insufficient to restrain some of the madly excited spectators, who immediately leaped out upon the track with the Keating thundering down upon

them. Roger saw the movement, and refused to throttle down, hoping to get past before any person could put himself in peril of being dashed into eternity.

Then suddenly he saw a man rush toward one of the two unfortunate human beings who had been thrown sprawling to the roadway by the overturned Comet. It was his father—his own father—in the path of death!

There was a sharp, instantaneous movement of Roger's steady hands upon the wheel, a perilous swerve of the racer, another swerve that brought it back to the course—and on it went.

"Thank God!" breathed Roger huskily, his face ghastly pale beneath its caking coat of oil and grime.

Over the line he shot, deaf to the mighty plaudits of the leaping multitude hailing him as conqueror from the stands.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GOAL IN SIGHT

WHEN Roger brought the panting racer to a stop Shea remained calm, and almost without a symptom of emotion he said: "Pretty good driving, Boltwood."

Looking back, and seeing no other car in sight, Roger turned as quickly as possible on the track, taking the outer left-hand side, and driving toward the stands. His one and only thought at that moment was of his father, and now he could feel the nerves quivering in every part of his body.

One of the two limping racers they had passed came hobbling over the finishing line unnoticed and unapplauded. Then the voice of the announcer was heard proclaiming through a huge megaphone:

"The Keating Kar, Boltwood driver, wins first position and the cup."

Once more the great throngs of people sent up a mighty shout. Those in the stands beheld Roger approaching, and, leaning toward him with outstretched arms and flushed faces, they gave

him the ovation of a conquering gladiator. He did not seem either to see or hear them. He was thinking of what had happened to the Comet, and how, by an almost infinitesimal margin, he had avoided killing his own father.

All along the front of the stands, as he rode close to give a clear road for any other racing cars that might come up, the crowd bellowed and surged and shouted when he passed. About him, torn from the throbbing bosoms of hundreds of ladies, falling upon his dust-covered shoulders in a perfect storm, rained bouquets of flowers. He had passed the stands when, from out of the subsiding tumult, the voice of the announcer again reached his ears: "Neither the driver nor the mechanician of the Comet is seriously hurt."

From somewhere Powers, his face glowing, bobbed up, and leaped upon the Keating, seizing Roger and giving him a tremendous hug.

"Finest race ever driven!" he cried. "You've won the cup, old fellow—you've won the cup!"

"Have you seen anything of my father?" asked Roger. "Do you know if he is all right? He must have been crazy to rush out on the track when Myers had that spill. I nearly killed him."

"Nobody was hurt," assured Powers. "Why, Myers wasn't even stunned. His mechanician is cut up some, but he was on his feet and able to stand in no time at all. Myers' heart is broken.

He was crying like a baby when they carried him off."

"He drove a fair and honest race, which is more than I can say for one other driver at least," said Boltwood.

The guards had surrounded the car to keep the crowd from pulling Roger out of it in their hero-worshiping madness, and, thus protected, he turned from the course and drove slowly to the garage.

Cyrus Keating was waiting there, panting a little from his haste to reach it ahead of Roger. He grasped Boltwood's hand as the young man stepped out of the conquering machine.

"Boy," he said, "you're one of the finest drivers in the world. Nobody who saw you drive today will dispute it."

"Thank you, Mr. Keating," said Roger, almost listlessly. "I tried to do my best, and that was all I could do."

"You're tired. You're pale. You're done up. I don't wonder. You must rest at once."

"I don't need rest," said Roger. "I need just a little time to recover from what happened after the Comet turned over."

"You had the Comet beaten, anyhow. When you passed for the last lap I knew you'd win if no accident happened to you."

"We were fortunate," said Roger, "to have so

little trouble. We changed only one tire in the race, and a bad plug held us up but a few minutes."

"You had the car that was built to win, and, with you driving, it won in spite of all the crooked schemes to beat it."

Roger had cast aside his gloves, helmet, and goggles. He felt stifled, and he walked out of the garage to get air. Two rods away he saw his father passing toward the Comet garage, accompanied by several other men. Instantly Roger bounded forward.

"Father!" he cried. "Father, I'm so glad—"

The words died on his lips, and his outstretched hands sank slowly; for Henry Boltwood had turned upon him a face so distorted by disappointment and anger, so repellent and accusing, that Roger was stricken dumb. For twenty seconds, perhaps, the elder man gazed with cold, hard eyes straight at his son; then, without a word, he walked on with his associates.

Roger's splendid shoulders drooped. "He shouldn't feel that way toward me," he muttered huskily. "It isn't right."

He was standing thus when a beautiful girl who had witnessed the rebuff, her face flushed, her eyes full of mingled sympathy and admiration, came up quickly, and placed her gloved hand on his arm.

"You drove a splendid race, Mr. Boltwood," she said, her voice thrilling him when even the plaudits of the multitude had failed. "But I feared you'd be killed, and I prayed—I prayed that you might not."

The color came back into his own face, showing through the mottled splotches of grime and dirt. There was a slight tremor in his voice as he brushed back a lock of hair from his broad forehead, and answered her laughingly:

"It was very good of you to be so interested in my performance, Miss Keating, and the knowledge of it gives me more pleasure than the winning of the cup."

Charlie Randall was escorting her, and even he came up and shook Roger's hand. "It was some race, old sport," he declared. "If I've ever said you couldn't drive—in proper condition to do so—I'll eat my words."

There was, perhaps, the slightest touch of malice and envy in this, but Roger chose to ignore it, and he thanked Randall quietly.

Cyrus Keating, bubbling with satisfaction and enthusiasm like a man thirty years younger, came from the garage, spoke to his daughter, and slapped a hand on Roger's back.

"The cup presentation will be made at once in front of the main stand," he said. "The Calvin, the Echo, and the Comet all failed to finish, and

the Prince was disqualified. The Ranco, the Morgan, and the Silent Hood are reported as following you in the order named. Shea's ready. Get into the car and go out there to receive the cup."

"It will be all over then, I hope," said Roger. "This will be the hardest part of the whole business."

All along the line people hailed him as he drove out to take his position in front of the main-stand box occupied by the chief officers of the racing board. In a sort of trance he bowed his thanks to the renewed thunders of applause which greeted him.

Next he realized that, standing in the front of the box, almost within arm's reach of him, Maxwell Traymore was making the presentation speech. The cheering had ceased, and gaping thousands were straining their ears to hear and their eyes to see. A huge floral piece, fashioned to spell the words "Cup Winner" inside a massive horseshoe, was passed out and received, Shea taking charge of it. Then, after a few more words, came the cup, the sight of which set the people cheering again as it was handed down.

The sound of their voices died away, and Roger, knowing what he must do, rose and replied with a few clear, distinct, modest words. Afterward to save him, he could not have repeated even the gist of what he said. But always he would vividly re-

member how the scene around him seemed to fade and melt and change, until in that supreme moment of his triumph he appeared to be looking upon an elm-shaded campus surrounded by dormitories with which he was familiar; a campus thronged with happy, purposeful students, himself one of them, back again—back at Yale!

CHAPTER XIX

MARTIN PHILBIN

ROGER BOLTWOOD had hoped to reënter New Haven without encountering any of his former associates. He was beginning to congratulate himself on his luck in dodging the small mob at the railway station, waiting to greet returning chums, when he nearly ran down Larry O'Leary.

"Careful, careful!" expostulated the beaming little Irishman, grabbing him with both hands. "You're not driving an automobile now, and you've got to have some consideration for pedestrians when you're afoot. Say, old man, I'm mighty glad to see you. Storrow, Conklin, and Bernfield are here already. You know, somebody said something about your not coming back. I didn't believe it. I told them you'd be here with bells on."

"I'm here," smiled Roger, "but I've cut out the bells. No big noise for me."

"S'matter, pop? I've lately heard rumors and hints at rumors, but in these degenerate modern days one can hear anything except the silvery

voice of truth. You know truth is said to lie at the bottom of a deep well. Huh! it's my opinion she was drowned long ago. It can't be that you're—"

"It can be," interrupted Roger promptly. "It is. I am. Never mind the harrowing details. Pardon me if I shrink at displaying the hideous family skeleton. Suffice it that I'm back here, sails close-hauled to the wind, and evidently a long-time passenger on the good ship Economy. Got to cut out former giddy pleasures, come to earth, and compass my course along the low-lands."

"You're joking, Rog. Some duck said you'd actually had to get out and work. Said you'd been forced to drive a racing automobile for money. I withered the foolish mutt with my scorn."

"Next time you'd better save your scorn for legitimate use, Larry. I'm back here by the skin of my teeth; to stay, I've got to live as cheaply and carefully as possible. Already I've sent notice that I couldn't take the rooms they were holding for me in Liberty. A modest dormitory for mine, and rooms shared with some economical chap. I don't suppose you know the man I'm looking for?"

Larry giggled, as if regarding the whole thing as a joke. "Lemme consider," he said, touching

his temple with the tip of his index finger. "Now there's Philbin, who used to sling hash last year in a night restaurant. Philbin has handed me many a juicy hot dog. Philbin is poor, worthy, persevering, and ambitious. I believe he's come up a trifle in the world this year. Dame Rumor hath whispered in my ear that Philbin has actually taken rooms in Lawrence. Doubtless he'd be willing to share those rooms and the expenses with one Roger Boltwood, late high roller and general good fellow, forced to retrench and travel at a slower pace because of heavy financial reverses. Oh, say, you and Mart Philbin would make a hot team—you sure would!" O'Leary finished by choking with laughter over the mental picture of Roger Boltwood and Martin Philbin as roommates.

"Thank you, Larry," said Roger quietly. "Perhaps I'll look this man Philbin up. So long! See you later."

As Boltwood swung off up the street, carrying his grip, Larry stared after him, scratching his head in a puzzled way. "He didn't take a cab. That's odd. He didn't even take a street car. That's odder. Never knew him to walk to save cab fare, and as for doing it to retain a miserable nickel in his jeans— Oh, blazes, never! He must be needing exercise. Still, Boltwood walking—for exercise! 'Tis passing strange."

O'Leary would have been flabbergasted had he followed Roger, seen him leave the hand-bag with a friendly cigar-counter clerk near the college buildings, and proceed from the cigar store direct to Lawrence.

On his way thither he passed the fine old Colonial mansion yclept "Liberty Hall" by the original coterie of wealthy students who, rebelling against the system of the college which relegated the men of certain classes to certain dormitories, had raised a fund by which the house was leased, renovated and furnished to suit their luxurious tastes. While this move had been frowned upon by the faculty, there was no rule forbidding students the choice of rooms outside the dormitories, and Liberty Hall promised to become an institution. By the more democratic undergraduates those who found quarters in Liberty were regarded as snobs. As he walked swiftly by Roger turned a glance on the great house and its fluted pillars of alabaster white.

"Farewell!" he muttered, with a grim smile. "Farewell to you and to all the joyous follies that came into my life with you."

A few of the early arrivals had gathered in a little knot near the fence, where they were exchanging greetings and gossip. Roger was aware that one of the group called the attention of the others to him, and that nearly all of them looked

in his direction; but by no outward symptom did he betray this knowledge.

At Lawrence, Josh, a colored man, told him where to find Martin Philbin. Following directions, he knocked at a door that was standing slightly ajar, thus permitting his ears distinctly to hear the softly whistled strains of "Annie Laurie" coming from the lips of some unseen person in the room.

The whistling stopped instantly. "Come in!" called a voice.

Roger pushed the door open, and stood on the threshold facing a tall, well-built, somewhat spare young man, who greeted him with a quizzical smile and an odd lifting of one eyebrow. In a twinkling Boltwood decided that he rather liked the chap.

"Are you Martin Philbin?" he asked.

"Sure as death and taxes," was the genial answer, made in a pleasant, musical tone of voice. "I'm Martin Philbin, but what the dickens Roger Boltwood wants of me I can't guess."

"You know me, then?" said Roger, stepping inside and surveying the rather poor study.

Philbin laughed, showing his splendid teeth. "I reckon 'most everybody knows you around here. Couldn't very well help it, you know, for you were always getting into the limelight. 'There he goes. Yes, that's him. Rog Boltwood, old Hen Boltwood's son. Father reeks with

money. Oh, he's some spender, believe me! And when he cuts loose—say, give him a clear track!' That's the way they talked, so how was a man to help knowing you by sight, Boltwood?"

Roger's face burned. "Thank you for the frank manner in which you have permitted me to see the light in which I was regarded, Philbin. Doubtless there was a reason. It's a good thing for somebody to hold the mirror up to a chap now and then. You've taken these rooms, have you?"

"Yes," answered Philbin proudly. "I managed to sleep and exist, when I had to, in a basement hole last year, but no more of that for me. I've had a little streak of luck, and now I'm going to try to live like a gentleman and a student, even if my suite isn't located in Liberty Hall."

"These rooms could be made fairly comfortable," said Roger. "They're not so bad, and you get a bit of sun in the morning. That's fine."

"Oh, I'll pick up some more things now and then as I can afford it," said Philbin. "I know I need rugs and chairs and portières and pictures, and some lace curtains at the windows wouldn't be bad, either. But I'm no millionaire's son, like you, Boltwood, and so I can't afford to do everything at once."

"I've got a load of stuff in storage that wouldn't go badly in these rooms," said Roger. "I've got the curtains, the rugs, the chairs, and

a corking good study table, not to mention pictures and knickknacks. What do you say if I move in such truck of mine as will go well here, Philbin?"

Again the young man lifted one eyebrow in that odd manner, at the same time pursing his lips like one about to whistle, but remaining silent as he surveyed the visitor with puzzled, questioning eyes.

"I couldn't begin to get all my truck in here," said Roger, "and we wouldn't need it, either. What we didn't need I could sell, perhaps, to fellows who might want it."

"We?" breathed Philbin. "What *we* don't need? Did I get you right, Boltwood? If I did, what's the play, if you don't mind putting me wise?"

"I thought," said Roger simply, "you might like to have some one share these rooms and the expenses with you, that's all."

Three times Philbin tried to speak, and he ended by dropping on a chair and bursting into a shout of incredulous, almost derisive, laughter.

"Go away, Boltwood!" he managed to say at length, limply waving Roger off. "You can't put anything like that over on me. You looking for a chance to room with some poor slob in Lawrence! You, the prince of high rollers, with a suite in Liberty, the home of swells!" Then of a sudden

it seemed that he viewed the matter in quite a different light, which promptly banished the mirth from his face and voice. Rising, he faced Roger, throwing back his shoulders and motioning toward the door. "It's a pretty poor joke, Boltwood," he said cuttingly, "when a man of your caliber has to seek his victim here. You don't show any indication that you've been drinking, but—"

"Wait a minute," interrupted Roger quickly. "You quite misapprehend, Philbin. There's no joke about it; I'm in dead, serious earnest. No need to give you particulars now; I'll do that at some better time; but I've found it necessary within the last two months to get out and hustle for myself. That means that I've not received a dollar or an atom of assistance from my father, and I'm not looking for anything of the sort. It means that I've got to live economically in order to get through college, and, hearing of you by chance, I've come here to propose that we enter into partnership. It's a sincere, honest offer. What do you say?"

Philbin stepped forward promptly, his slender, shapely hand extended for Roger to grasp.

"I say hooray!" he answered. "It hits me as some fine proposition. Move your belongings in as soon as you please."

CHAPTER XX

OLD FRIENDS

IT was not possible to use even a fourth of Boltwood's furniture and knickknacks in those two rooms at Lawrence. A splendid Turkish rug practically hid the flooring, and with fine, solid-looking easy-chairs and Roger's study table, the aspect of the place was soon changed. Then came bookcases filled with books, and pictures and banners to adorn the walls. Some beautiful portières, toning with the Turkish floor rug, were hung to cut off more than a glimpse of the bedroom, in which Roger had two single beds set up, with the finest of hair mattresses and everything to correspond.

With coat and collar peeled off, his shirt sleeves rolled up, Roger genuinely enjoyed the work of putting the rooms in order. His enjoyment was deepened by the enthusiasm and delight of Philbin, who seemed literally transported by his good fortune in acquiring such a roommate.

"Say," he exclaimed, as he stood in the middle of the study, and gazed around, "if the spirit of my dear old aunt could take a peep in here now

she'd be horrified by the belief that I had begun to spend the little pot of money she left me in riotous and reckless extravagance. Why, I don't suppose Aunt Henrietta ever saw a real Turkish rug in all her life. But she was some aunt, Boltwood, believe me. She saved the pennies, and the pennies grew into dollars. I was her favorite nephew, and just when things looked blackest for me Aunt Henrietta up and died, and left me all she had."

Roger, willing to pause for a moment, came and flung a leg over a corner of the study table.

"So it was luck that brought you back to Yale, Phil. Well, I had some luck myself, else I'd not be here."

"Yes, it was luck," said Philbin, a shadow settling on his fine face. "I tell you, Boltwood, old man, I don't believe I could have stood another year of what I had to go through as a freshman. It wasn't the work. I don't mind work. It wasn't tending the furnaces in winter. But you'll never know what I had to stand for as waiter in that night lunchroom."

"I suppose some of the customers were thoughtlessly insolent," said Roger. "Of course, I know the kind of chaps who roll into a place like that after midnight. Lots of them have their skins full, and they don't know what they are saying."

"It wasn't that so much, though of course it got under my hide some. But, Boltwood, the man who runs that restaurant is simply a beast. And I had to work for him or get out of college. It was the last and only thing I could find to do to keep myself from starving."

"Hard lines, sure," said Roger sympathetically. "I've never been up against anything like that, Phil, old man. I don't think I could quite stand for it."

"My people came from the South," murmured Philbin, with a short laugh. "I was raised in Ohio, but my mother was born in Georgia. She's an invalid, poor mother. She's paralyzed, and can't even feed herself. But her mind is as active as ever, and if she had ever known what I was going through that year in order to get an education it would have driven her plumb crazy. I didn't even let my father suspect anything like the real truth, Boltwood. He's a minister."

"Oh, then you're a minister's son?"

"I am, but I fear I don't live up to the tradition. I've never touched any of the high places, for I haven't had the chance; and now I'm positive I wouldn't have the inclination. Do you know, I've always had to be so confounded careful of the pennies that I fear it has got into my blood. Even if I should inherit a fortune to-day I don't believe I could enjoy it as a man should. It would

hurt me to spend money, and a man who can't enjoy spending has no business to have more than he absolutely needs for necessary expenses. If I seem to be penurious or mean sometimes, Bolt, just make allowances for me—will you, old man?"

"You bet I will!" said Roger earnestly, as he stepped forward and placed a hand on his roommate's shoulder. "You know one of the hardest things in the world for me is to hold on to money. I've always had all I could spend for anything I wanted, and, now that conditions have changed, as long as I find a dollar down in my pocket I have to fight not to blow it for the first thing that strikes my fancy. It's really a fight, Phil. It's got on my nerves a bit, too; for sometimes I resent it because I can't buy anything I happen to see and want. Your training, old chap, has gone to one extreme, and mine to the other. Both of us should realize that there is a happy medium, and we must try to find it."

As far as possible, during the time following his return to New Haven and the opening of the college term, Roger avoided public places where he would be likely to encounter any of his old associates. With Philbin he ate at Commons, knowing that there was little chance that his professed friends of last year would meet him there. It was impossible, however, to continue to avoid

them indefinitely, and presently he ran squarely into Walter Storrow and Irving Conklin.

"There's Bolt—there he is now," said Storrow, in his solemn fashion. "O'Leary was right; he's here."

His face wreathed in smiles, Conklin dashed forward and seized Roger's hand. "Where the devil have you been keeping yourself, Boltwood?" he spluttered. "You're not in Old Lib. O'Leary said you came two days ago, but I thought he was lying. Fitzgerald said you weren't here—didn't believe you'd come at all."

"What does Fitzgerald know about my plans?" asked Roger. "Probably he got his pointers from Tom Keating, and I haven't been letting Keating into my private business."

"But where are you stopping? Where are you going to room?" questioned Storrow.

"I'm rooming in Lawrence."

Conklin staggered and made a clutch at the empty air, while Storrow seemed a graven image of disbelief.

"Lawrence!" spluttered Conklin. "Well, you have come down!"

"There's no law to compel you to believe it," said Roger; "but if you want to find me any time you'll have to hunt me up there. That's a dormitory for sophomores, and I'm a sophomore. I'm rooming with a man named Philbin."

"In Lawrence!" groaned Storrow. "Oh, how have the mighty fallen!"

"Come on," urged Conklin. "Come for a ball with us. I need a bracer after this. Where shall we go?"

"You'll have to excuse me, boys," said Roger. "The same thing that brought me up to Lawrence has caused me to cut out the joy juice. No more of that for me."

"Oh, come, come!" scoffed Conklin. "What are you trying to put across, Rog? It won't go with this bunch."

"Here come Bernfield and Kilmer," said Storrow. "They've got their blinkers on us."

The two approaching students came up rapidly, the blue eyes of the taller man, a curly-haired blond, lighting with an expression of pleasure at sight of Roger.

"Why, how are you, Boltwood, old fel?" he exclaimed, grasping Roger's hand. "Queer, but I was speaking of you to Kilmer just as we spied you chinning with Storrow and Conklin. What's this guff O'Leary was telling me about your taking rooms in Lawrence?"

"No guff about it, Bernfield," replied Roger, unabashed, while he shook hands with Price Kilmer, the other man—short, stout, red-faced, and inclined to puff short-windedly. "Having found it absolutely necessary to change my mode of liv-

ing on account of cramped finances, I gave up my rooms in Liberty, and am living somewhat more modestly in a thoroughly respectable dormitory."

"Why, old man," said Bernfield promptly, "if you are a bit hard up for any reason, there are plenty of fellows who would loan you all you need. You should know you could come to me any time. I believe I've found it necessary to give *you* the touch once or twice."

"I'm afraid you don't understand the circumstances, Bern. I appreciate what you have just said, but I wasn't in a position to go on living here as I have lived, and I couldn't borrow money of anybody without knowing how I was to pay it."

"Is it possible," said Kilmer, in a throaty voice, "that there's some truth in the rumor I heard about you, Boltwood? Did your dad fall out with you?"

"No," smiled Roger; "I was the one who fell out, and I struck bottom hard."

"Look here," said Kilmer; "it ain't true, is it, that you're the R. Boltwood who drove the winning Keating Kar in the Traymore Cup Race? Somebody said so, but I didn't believe it."

"I'm the same R. Boltwood," admitted Roger.

"Well, by Jove! by Jove!" gurgled the stout chap. "Wouldn't believe it. Said I knew better. Why, you won the cup! Driving a Keating, too! How'd it happen you didn't drive a Comet?"

"It's a long, sad story," laughed Roger, with pretended lightness. "I will not weary you with the tale. I will say, however, that by driving a Keating and defeating the Comet I apparently drove the final and clinching nail in the coffin containing my hope of reconciliation with one Henry Boltwood. Now I beg you spare my feelings."

"Oh, it's all a joke—I know it is," declared Conklin. "These fathers get grouchy sometimes, but they have to come round in the end. Come on, everybody, let's saunter over to Heub's and have a ball. If Boltwood chooses to play the part of a martyr until his old man relents, he's the only one that will have to suffer. Mighty clever idea, Bolt —really it is. The old boy will get worried about you, and come nosing around to find you living frugally like a poverty-stricken dub, and he'll be smitten by remorse because of his cold and cruel brutality, and he'll fold you to his penitent bosom, and—"

"You've never met my father, Conk," interrupted Roger. "If he should chance to find me living on husks in a hovel there would be no slaughter of the fatted calf. I can't seem to convince you that I've cut out the frisky thirst quencher, but again I declare it as a positive fact. I have— What's the matter, Storrow?"

Martin Storrow was surveying with an expres-

sion of intense dislike a quartet of young men who were sauntering past.

"Oh, nothing; only there's Pony Dill," growled Storrow. "He thinks he's the real thing since he got in with Keating's crowd. The lisping little jackass! He attempted to throw the hooks into me once, and I'm waiting for a chance to get back at him."

Tom Keating himself was one of the four swagger-looking youths who were chatting and laughing as they sauntered by Roger and his companions. Nodding in a friendly yet reserved manner, Keating spoke to each of the fellows save Roger, calling him by name. His omission of Boltwood was so obvious that, as a specimen of bad manners, it reached the limit.

"The infernal cad!" murmured Norry Bernfield. "Evidently he still remembers the time you made him look like a cheap shine with the eight-ounce gloves, Bolt. I never did have much use for that bounder."

"But Rog drove the Keating Kar in the cup race," gurgled Kilmer.

"And was paid for it," put in Roger.

Back from the students who had passed drifted the voice of Tom Keating: "Oh, they'll drop him when they find out he hasn't the coin to keep up the pace they—" His words became indistinguishable. Conklin, Bernfield, Kilmer, and

Storrow looked at one another and then at Roger. They knew he had heard the words intended for his ears, but, instead of seeming at all disturbed, he smiled.

"The dirty cad!" exploded Conklin. "We'll show him! Come on, Rog, you can't refuse now."

He passed his arm through Boltwood's, nodding to Kilmer, who promptly took the other arm, and in this manner they bore Roger away to Heublein's.

CHAPTER XXI

THE TOAST

ROGER insisted on taking sarsaparilla. Not even the remonstrances of Kilmer or the joshing of Conklin influenced him to change his mind. When Bernfield produced his monogrammed case and passed it, Boltwood declined to accept a cigarette:

"I've cut out smoking, too," he stated gravely. "You know an automobile racing driver needs his nerve, and cigarettes aren't the best thing in the world for a man's nerves."

"Do you mean to say you've gone into the racing game as a business?" asked Kilmer dubiously, bowing to some students passing their table. "It's dangerous, old man. You must have seen proof of that in that cup race. If you're really looking to be killed, however, you might take up flying. That's got the other thing beaten when it comes to the number of subjects it furnishes for the undertaker."

"If it hadn't been for the racing game I wouldn't be here now," said Roger quietly, "and I've made a sort of agreement with Cyrus Keat-

ing. If I drive in another race it will be at the wheel of a Keating Kar."

Storrow shook his head. His habitually solemn manner had led his friends to give him the nickname of "Gloom."

"Couldn't hire me to drive in one of those races," he asserted, "for fifty thousand dollars."

"Still," said Roger, "you'll sit in the tonneau of a high-powered car with a lot of drinks under your belt, and nobody can drive fast enough to keep you from growling about the way he's crawling along."

"That's different."

"Yes, it's different, and the difference lies in the fact that in a professional race the driver probably is absolutely sober, while in a joy ride nine times out of ten he isn't. I've been doing some thinking in the last ten minutes, fellows. I appreciate the manner in which you brought me here, and your evident purpose to demonstrate that altered circumstances on my part have not changed your regard for me. In spite of all that, the situation is decidedly altered. Last year I was in a position to accept hospitality and favors from any man, for I could return everything with interest. To-day it's different."

"Oh, come—" Bernfield attempted to break in.

"Wait, Bern," persisted Roger. "Let me say

what I started to say. You ought to know, fellows, that I'm not the kind of a chap to travel with any set of men unless able to keep up my end. I'm no sponge or hanger-on."

"I'd punch the man who hinted such a thing!" exclaimed Bernfield.

"Thanks! You're a gentleman, Bern. Now you can all see the position in which you would place me if I tried to keep in with you. I couldn't do my share of the buying, for I haven't got the needful. What little money I've got I must take care of if I'm going to get through the present college year. You've offered to loan me money, but I hope I can get through Yale without being compelled to borrow a dollar from any man."

"Noble ambition!" muttered Kilmer, with a slight touch of sarcasm, it seemed.

"There may be nothing noble about it, but I've just decided on that one thing, and I'm going to ask you fellows to help me stick to it. Your friendship I shall always appreciate, be sure of that, no matter if I can't be one of you. And you can see that that is out of the question. I've got to follow the only course open to me that will allow me to maintain my self-respect. Last year I was known as a high roller, but there's no more high rolling for me—no more gay parties, midnight suppers, joy rides, and all that. The day

my father and I dissolved I came down to earth with a thump that jarred me and opened my eyes to just what I was up against."

"But we can't let you quit our little circle of good fellows, Rog," protested Conklin. "We won't listen to it."

Norry Bernfield sipped his high ball and put down the glass meditatively. Suddenly he said: "Boltwood is right. I've been trying to put myself in his place, and I think I can see this thing from his viewpoint. In his position I'd feel just as he does, although I might not be as cheerful. It takes a lot of sand for a man to be cheerful when hard luck has handed him a solar-plexus wallop of this sort. Bolt, I want you to remember that I'm your friend under any and all circumstances. I hope you won't forget it."

"I won't, Bern, bet your life! I'm glad you appreciate my position. I'm glad you back me up. As a special favor, I want to ask you fellows to do something for me. Whenever you feel like inviting me to join you, as you have to-day, I wish you wouldn't. You'll simply make it necessary for me to refuse, and you can imagine that refusing wouldn't be the easiest thing in the world."

"Are you going to cut everything out?" asked Storrow. "Are you going to keep away from your club, even? You haven't shown your nose there since coming back."

"Because I knew I'd run into friends who would extend invitations to conviviality, and I was ducking such things. When all my friends come to know just how the matter stands, you'll see me around the club sometimes."

"Everybody figured," said Kilmer, "that you were one man of the bunch who stood the best chance of making Bones."

"Bones!" exclaimed Roger, modulating his voice involuntarily, although there seemed to be no listeners to fear outside their little group. "I, one of the fifteen favored by the gods! Quit your kidding, Gloomy."

"Still," murmured Bernfield, moving his glass round and round on a little wet spot, "still, it wouldn't surprise me. You may stand a better chance than you would if things hadn't happened this way."

Roger lifted his glass of sarsaparilla. "Drink to my good luck!" he begged. "There's really worse luck than for a spendthrift son to be kicked outdoors by a rich dad. A year ago I wouldn't have thought so. I've changed my mind about many things in the last few weeks. Drink, boys; it may be the last time you'll have a chance to do so with Roger Boltwood—unless you drink at a soda fountain."

Norry Bernfield rose to his feet, lifting his glass. "I'm going to drink it standing, then," he

said, as the others imitated his example. "Here's to Roger Boltwood, good fellow, loyal friend, man to his marrow. May he get a strangle hold on hard luck, and put it to the mat. I believe he will. And if anybody wants to gamble on it, I'll back Bolt to the extent of every dollar I can raise."

"Thank you, Bernfield," said Roger quietly, suppressing a sudden throb of feeling. "You've given me a good big boost on the way."

"Drink it down, drink it down," cried the others. "Here's to Boltwood!"

They clinked their glasses and drank.

"Now, fellows," said Roger, "I hope you'll excuse me, for I've got to get back to my rooms and do some grinding. Yes, I'm actually studying, and if I fail to pass a second time it won't be my fault."

They shook hands with him, and watched him leave, Bernfield's eyes taking the measure of his fine figure as he passed out of the room and the door closed behind him. For some minutes the four men sat silently around the table.

"Jove!" came presently from Kilmer's lips. "Hard luck for Boltwood, eh?"

"Hard luck?" said Bernfield instantly. "Nothing of the sort! It might have seemed like hard luck for a weaker person; for him it was the best that could have happened. I didn't dream he had

the stuff in him, but he's showing that it's there all right, and he'll come out on top. If this hadn't happened to him he might have developed into a useless spender, instead of a real man."

CHAPTER XXII

THE UNMASKING

ROGER BOLTWOOD had disappeared from his former haunts at New Haven, and he was seen no more with the swift set in which he had once scintillated as a star of the first magnitude. Therefore it was no more than natural that many of those who thought of him at all, recalling the fact that he had been dropped a year, reached the conclusion that he had not returned to Yale. Some of these told themselves that it was no particular loss to the college.

Of course Tom Keating chuckled with malicious satisfaction, and called the attention of his friends to the fact that he had been quite right in prophesying Boltwood's prompt throw-down by former chums when they should learn of his altered circumstances.

Roger had spoken the truth when he declared that he was studying hard. He was doing so for the first time in his life. Always, until the occasion of the humiliating failure which had set him back a year in college, he had in some way suc-

ceeded in "getting by." One reason for such good luck was that he had an elastic mind which permitted itself to be crammed and jammed to the limit by a tutor at the very last moment, retaining this condition of falsely acquired information and knowledge just long enough to make temporary use of it—then seeming to forget it all completely.

That the modest student who roomed in Lawrence, appeared regularly in class, chapel, and lecture hall, and spent hours studying like any ordinary grind, was the former high-flying Roger Boltwood seemed incredible—even to Roger himself.

Again and again he found himself lagging a little, and yearning to falter. Even in his rooms during those hours he had resolved to spend in honest study he often awoke to realize that he was loafing and dreaming like any other lazy, irresponsible chap.

Not that he had foolishly made up his mind never to rest, never to relax; he had sense enough to know that rest and relaxation are absolutely essential to the man who would rise to his highest efficiency and make the most of himself. Not, however, until he had satisfied himself with each day's required task would he sit back and take things easy.

It was in one of these breathing spells, not long after the college term got fairly into smooth-

running order, that Philbin made a suggestion. Roger was walking restlessly up and down the cramped room, with Martin's eyes following him, when the latter suddenly said:

"Why don't you go out for the eleven, Bolt? If I had your build and spring-steel make-up I would. You're like a caged beast sometimes, prancing back and forth here to work off some of your surplus energy."

Roger stopped short, and stared at his roommate. "The eleven, Phil? I don't remember receiving a letter of invitation to come out."

"You don't have to have one. You know a general notice was posted. Why should you receive a special invitation, anyhow?"

"Don't know of any particular reason," admitted Roger; "only it's customary to send out such special requests to especially promising subjects."

"Do you consider," queried Philbin, "that you've been an especially promising subject?"

"Hardly. Don't know why I should go in for football. If it were baseball I might feel differently about it. I do get cramped and nervous sitting here plugging, and I suppose I ought to take up something. Reckon the best thing would be a general line of work in the gym."

"And where would that get you to, old man? It might put those good muscles and sinews of

yours in a little better condition, but you'd be the only man to benefit by it."

"Well, I'm the only man I've got to look out for at present, am I not?"

"You are—not! Simply because you've been selfish and egotistical—never thought of any one except Roger Boltwood—now, don't hand me that sort of a glare; you've said it yourself—simply because you've been that way all your life, up to date, doesn't make it right for you to continue that way. You've turned over a new leaf. It's time now that you dug yourself well out of the old ruts."

"Well, say, Philbin, you're certainly handing me a warm line of conversation. Egotism! Selfishness! Will you please demonstrate where my egotism stands out so prominently? Will you explain what you mean by calling me selfish?"

"I'll do my best," said Philbin cheerfully. "I'm not denying that your course since being cast forth upon the world by your father has been rather commendable—as far as it goes. Before that you were selfish without any particular effort on your part. Since then you've been compelled to make efforts, but you've made them for yourself alone, with absolutely no thought of any one else."

"Huh!" grunted Roger, frowning. "Go on; go on!"

"And you're egotistical. You're proud of the fact that you didn't become a bummer and gutter vag after your father threw you out."

"Proud of it! Why shouldn't I be?"

Philbin smiled that charming, friendly smile which displayed his fine teeth. "Did avoiding that prove to be such a terribly difficult thing?" he asked. "Do you think you deserve any tremendous amount of credit for your success thus far? Were you compelled to work like a dog and suffer every sort of privation in order to get back here to college? Isn't it a fact that you tumbled into a streak of luck and won your way back at a single stroke, by doing something you were especially qualified to do by nature and some degree of experience; by performing a piece of work that required only hours instead of days and months and years—a piece of work, at that, which gave you keen delight instead of acute suffering?"

Boltwood raised a hand in smiling protest.

"Wait just a moment; I haven't finished," said Philbin. "Isn't it a fact that, having made a tremendous stride toward the goal in that easy manner, you are still finding a sort of chesty pride in giving up your former luxurious, easy mode of living, cutting yourself off from old friends, and demonstrating that you've got a lot of bulldog determination in you that makes you just as good as the next fellow—and a little better than the

most of them? Don't you, every time you think of the old enjoyable fleshpots, pat yourself metaphorically on the back and whisper compliments for your own ears?"

Gradually Boltwood's face had taken on a deeper flush, and presently it was burning scarlet. He had seemed indignant at the outset, but now he appeared to be considering the plain words of his roommate, not one of which had wholly missed the target. Philbin gave him time.

Suddenly Roger looked up, laughing in a half-shamed manner. "By Jove, Philbin," he said, "you've certainly got it all figured out to a T. I never thought of it that way before, but you're right. You're dead right." He sank down on a chair, elbows on his knees, his chin propped on his cupped hands.

"I thought you'd see it," said Philbin, his manner wholly devoid of the offensive. "You know the old saying, 'A knock is a boost,' and I mean it that way in this case. If I hadn't felt absolutely positive that you had the right stuff in you, Boltwood, I'd never have said the things I have."

"Thanks!" said Roger slowly. "I didn't realize that I was wearing a mask till you stripped it off, Phil; now I'm just beginning to get a look at my real self. Say, what have I done to feel chesty about? What am I doing now that's not, as you put it, solely for my own selfish ends? I thought

I had proved myself some real big gun, but I see that as yet I've proved nothing at all. It was luck that boosted me, from the time I found Cyrus Keating stalled on Long Island until I won the Traymore Cup. And a man who has been raised by mere luck, and goes round hugging the idea that he's the greatest thing that ever happened is simply an egotistical, foolish dub. I've collapsed like a pricked bladder, Phil. You've taken the wind out of my sails completely."

"I don't want to do that; I want to put more wind into them. I want you to stand by the helm and steer a straight course for the right port. Say, I'm getting nautical, and I never saw the ocean in my life until I came to college!"

His pleasant laugh brought a smile stealing back to Boltwood's face, but Roger immediately grew grave again. A frown crept into his brow, and the muscles of his jaw tensed perceptibly.

"In this matter of selfishness," he said presently, "I don't see just what I'm going to do. We're all selfish, every one of us. We're working for ourselves. We plug to get an education, in order that we may be fitted to go into the world and buck up against things and win—for our own good. You're doing that very thing. I realize that it has cost you a blamed sight more than it has me, but—"

"That's generous, at least, Bolt. Do you know

what I'd do if I could? Do you know what's caused me no small amount of regret because of my inability to get at it? I'll tell you. If I had any small qualifications which would enable me to go in for football, baseball, rowing, or the track team, you'd see me spending all the time needed to develop those qualifications. I'd do it, not simply for myself but for my college. I think I've felt a bit of the true Yale spirit already, although, like most fellows in my position, I've had little chance to get saturated with it. It's a great thing, Boltwood—the Yale spirit. Do you know what it is?"

"Why, really, old man, I'm not sure. I thought I did. I thought it meant loyalty to Old Eli. I thought it meant belief in Yale, its traditions, its glories, its magnificent accomplishments. I thought it meant a feeling of fellowship toward every worthy, loyal Yale man."

"And you might add that you thought it meant following up the track events, and cheering for the Yale men who participated. You thought it meant sitting on the bleachers at a football or baseball game and singing and cheering with the rest of your class. You thought it meant going down to New London and yelling yourself hoarse for the crew. It means more than all that. It means action. It means hard work, long and persistent work, and sharp, strenuous endeavor to

maintain the standard of the college in some way or other. When a man isn't fitted to do this on the athletic field or in the boat, he has to look around for other methods. Certainly he's far less fortunate than the fellow who can train for and take part in athletics. You're a natural athlete, Boltwood. If you hadn't been, your manner of living would have put you to the bad long ago. No matter what form of athletics you take up, you should go in for something or other without faltering or delay. It's a duty you owe your college. I suggested football because it seemed to me that you were built for it, and I know the team is going to need every good man it can develop this year."

Boltwood again resumed his walk up and down the length of the Turkish rug. For a minute or two Philbin watched him quizzically, one eyebrow elevated in that odd manner of his, but he did not venture to say anything further. Presently Roger paused, and turned toward his companion.

"I'm going to think this thing over, Phil," he announced decisively. "I'm much obliged for your suggestion. Perhaps I'll make a try."

CHAPTER XXIII

OUT FOR THE ELEVEN

THE following day Roger Boltwood appeared before Captain Brinkley Brooks on the football field, and announced himself as a candidate for the team. Although knowing Boltwood by reputation, Brooks did not recognize him, and he surveyed the applicant with a critical eye.

"You've got the build," he said. "Ever play?"

"At Andover one year."

"Only one?"

"That's all."

"What was the matter? Why didn't you play longer? Was it your last year?"

"My second," answered Roger, realizing that he was beginning to turn red. "I sort of—fell out of it—after that."

"Hum!" grunted Brooks. "What's your name?"

"Boltwood."

"Eh? Boltwood? Not Roger Boltwood? Why, hang it, yes you are! I remember some one pointing you out to me once, Boltwood."

Roger wondered under what circumstances this had happened, and, thinking of the escapades by which he had won the title of "high roller," the crimson deepened in his face.

Brooks was looking him over once more. Out on the field a great swarm of men were working under the directions of "Red" Harney, the head coach, and several assistants. Roger pretended to be interested in their maneuvers while Brooks took his physical measure for the second time.

"I presume you're serious about this, Boltwood?" said the captain. "Of course, you know what it means. You know you'll have to cut out the fancy stuff, come down to plain living, steady training, and rigorous, hard work. Unless you mean to—"

"If I hadn't meant to comply with every requirement I wouldn't be here, Captain Brooks," interrupted Roger, a bit warmly.

"Hi, Addison!" hailed Brooks. "Come here, please."

At the call a young man in soiled football togs turned and jogged up.

"Addison, this is Roger Boltwood, a new candidate. Take him over to the locker building, and find him some sort of a suit, will you?"

"Sure," responded Addison, with a ghost of a grin, as he looked Roger over. "Ain't much

stuff left, but I reckon I can fit him out somehow. Come on, Boltwood."

In the locker building Addison finally dug out an old jersey, some pants, a pair of heelless, toeless stockings, and some disreputable cleated shoes.

"This stuff has been through the wash, Boltwood," he said, "but I don't know as you'll care to put it on. Perhaps you'll feel more like furnishing your own togs."

"On the contrary," answered Roger, as he began to peel down, "I don't feel that way at all. Football clothes cost money."

"I guess you can afford 'em if you want to. If a fellow in your place hasn't confidence enough in himself to spend that much, I'm doubtful of his chance to last very long."

Roger did not see fit to enlighten Addison concerning the conditions which evidently made him appear in the man's eyes like a miser. Boltwood was tired of such explaining, and in time Addison would find out for himself.

Left alone, Roger made haste to get into the worn garments, and returned with as little delay as possible to the field, where, perceiving Brooks hard at work with a bunch of greenhorns, he reported to Red Harney.

"All right!" snapped Harney, without even

looking at him. "Go out there and chase punts with those fellows."

Although the rules were greatly changed since the year when he had played half-heartedly at Andover, Roger knew how to chase punts and fall on the ball scientifically, even if he was somewhat out of practice. Nevertheless, a period of slamming himself on to the pigskin seemed to attract the attention of no one save Andy Dowling, a man with whom he collided in a mix-up of two erratically bounding balls.

Now it chanced that, once on a time, Boltwood had unintentionally, though perhaps not without some blame, incurred the displeasure of Dowling, who had fancied that Roger maliciously singled him out for ridicule by imitating his misfortune as a stutterer, which was troublesome only in times of excitement. Not having a forgiving disposition, or being of a forgetful turn, Dowling had maintained a decided dislike for Roger from that day.

And now, by accident, they came together with a crash as they flung themselves bodily at one of the two bounding footballs. The shock made both of them see stars for a moment, and their attitudes of half-stunned astonishment as they lifted themselves from the ground would have caused laughter, had not every one around them been too busy with his own affairs to give them attention.

"Um-mum!" groaned Roger, rubbing his head and blinking at Dowling. "I beg your pardon."

"Huh!" rasped Dowling, glaring back. "Why didn't you fall on your own bub-ball? What are you doing here, anyhow?"

"I'm trying to do the same thing you are, I reckon," returned Roger cheerfully, choosing to ignore the wrathful, sneering manner of the other man. "I'm tearing up the earth in a mad endeavor to prove that I've special qualifications to become Yale's football star of the present season."

"You!" muttered Dowling, as if he could not believe it possible. "Why, you—"

"Yes, that's quite true," admitted Roger, rising quickly and offering the other man a helping hand. "But you're thinking about last year. It's different now."

Ignoring the proffered assistance, Dowling scrambled up.

"Fuf-fine football player—" he began.

But Roger cut him short in the midst of his stammered sarcasm. "Thanks for the compliment, Dowling. There's a coach snarling his head off at us. We'd better cut out the sociable chat just now."

He caught up one of the footballs, gave it a deft turn between his two palms, dropped it, and punted it easily and gracefully straight into the

hands of the fuming coach. The latter gave Roger a single sharp look, as if meaning to recognize him again, and the practice went on. Next time Roger saw Andy Dowling, the man, with some other candidates chosen from the green squad, was waiting his turn to tackle the dummy. Boltwood wondered how it happened that he was not given a chance at the canvas man, but decided that it was because he had appeared late on the field as a candidate, Dowling having had the advantage of more than a week of practice.

There was a short game between the scrub and the regulars, watched with deep interest and anxiety by the big group of new men who were ambitious to become players. A few of these were called into action at intervals by the coach, who plainly had special ones in his mind that he wished to give work of this sort. Feeling a throb of satisfaction because Dowling was not among the ones thus favored, Roger was genuinely ashamed when he realized that such jealous emotion was evidence of the selfishness with which he had been charged by Philbin.

Thus early, a considerable list of hopeless would-be's had been dropped, and to-day still more of the aspiring but never-could-qualify candidates were given notice that they must shelve their hopes of football glory. Everything in the form of deadwood was being trimmed away as

fast as possible, to give the coaches a chance to concentrate their work upon a smaller number who seemed really worthy of attention. Henceforth, as the reduced ranks of the volunteers were tested more and more minutely, men would continue to be dropped in gradually decreasing numbers until, the season advancing, a regular squad of possible players remained to be drilled, pounded, hammered, and tried in every conceivable way by which the right men might be culled from it for the last great game of the year.

"Perhaps it's a good thing I didn't come out earlier," thought Boltwood. "Maybe I'd have found myself dropped already, without having a fair chance."

Arriving at his rooms after the usual short run, shower, and rubdown which followed practice, Roger told Philbin what he had done, and was congratulated

"Oh, but you'll get there, you'll make the team," predicted Philbin confidently. "If you don't make it this year, there's another year coming, you know."

"I've thought of that, but, being of an impetuous and impatient nature, I've decided to make it this year. It's become something of a necessity after your talk of yesterday, in which you brutally opened my eyes to the fact that thus far I've really done nothing at all worthy of feeling cocky

over. In order to win back a certain necessary amount of self-respect, I've got to do something worth while. You gave me a tip, and I'm following it. Watch my smoke."

But if Roger really entertained a belief that his rapid progress would heat the air to the smoking point, he was doomed to disappointment. Coming out for the second and third days, he found himself still one of the unrecognized mass of greenhorns who were allowed to pound themselves stiff and sore chasing the ball and falling on it; but for some unknown reason, he was not called on to try the dummy or to take part in a real scrimmage.

What made it all the more annoying was the fact that Dowling had apparently attracted Red Harney's attention, and was given an opportunity to work with the scrub in a practice game, during which, although he did nothing specially remarkable, he had a position in the line—and filled it!

The opening game with Wesleyan was at hand. More men were dropped, but still, though seemingly ignored, Boltwood did not receive notice that his services were no longer required at the field. Within him, however, there sprouted and grew a sense of being baffled, of increasing annoyance, which threatened to develop into resentment.

"There's something back of this," he decided, just as thousands of men before him had arrived

at the conviction that partiality was keeping them from advancement toward a definite goal. "I don't know what it is, but I'm sure something is preventing me from getting a chance to show. They've got to give me a chance. If they don't, somebody is going to hear a loud, unpleasant noise, at least."

When he told his roommate, Philbin betrayed apprehension. "But you're not going to quit?" he cried.

Roger snorted. "Quit? Say, Phil, what do you take me for? I've just begun. They can't throw me down without giving me some sort of a try-out, and if I get as much as half a show I'm going to make some of those other men go like blazes to hold their jobs."

"You will," said Philbin, his eyes on Roger's lower jaw. "If you get half a show you'll play against Harvard this year. If I ever gambled—which I do not—I'd bet on it."

CHAPTER XXIV

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

ROGER BOLTWOOD was not chosen to appear on the field as one of the Yale squad of substitutes in the Wesleyan game, and he had not expected to be. But, sitting in the stand, with Philbin beside him, cheering the Yale men as they trotted out, he felt a stab of jealous resentment on beholding Andy Dowling in the midst of those substitutes. To him it seemed that Dowling was being pushed ahead by some unknown influence—an impression he could not cast off, even though he had been taught to believe that such things did not happen at Yale.

"What's the matter?" cried Philbin, gripping his knee. "Why don't you cheer? Is it the old selfishness that's got you gagged?"

Roger had not realized that he was not cheering, and now he got into it with his college mates.

Three belated juniors came pushing up the aisle, and crowded in with a number of friends at Roger's very elbow. One of them was Keating, but not until he had seated himself did he discover that Boltwood was beside him. Immediately he appealed to one of his friends:

"I say, Fitz, old man, change places with me, will you? I've got something I want to tell Pony."

Owen Fitzgerald, one of Keating's intimates, and apparently a rather decent fellow, promptly complied. Having pushed over against Roger, Fitzgerald recognized him.

"Hello, Boltwood," he said, in a semi-friendly fashion. "I've hardly put eyes on you this year. Heard some gossip. I thought you came out for the eleven?"

"I did," was the answer.

"Really? Well, say, it's hard luck to be dropped as soon as this."

Roger was on the verge of informing Fitzgerald that he had not yet been dropped, when Keating laughed loudly in a manner that was little short of insulting. For by every token, even though he wasted the sneering look flung toward Boltwood, it was all too evident that he intended that his jeering merriment should jar the man he disliked so intensely.

"What's the joke, Keat?" called Dan Canfoil, one of the group, who had the reputation of being a most successful card player. "You seem amused."

"I am," answered Tom. But he did not state the cause of his amusement.

"Those sapheads give me a cramp, Bolt,"

growled Philbin. "I should think you'd congratulate yourself that you're no longer traveling with them."

"I never traveled with this particular bunch. Of course, I've met them all, but I believe most of my friends were of a little different grade."

"I should hope so. Just listen to that!"

Pony Dill chanced at the moment to be lisping in his mincing manner:

"My word! There'th Bwick Kimball with the thquad. I never thought he'd thtick to it tho long. And there'th old Andy Dowling. Look, Keat! There'th Andy! Thee him?"

"Sure he's there," said Tom. "Dowling's going to make the team this year, mark what I say. It's early in the season to prophesy, but, take it from me, he'll get on."

Of course these words did not escape Roger, even though he seemed absorbed in the warming-up practice which was now taking place on the field. For the first time Boltwood recalled the fact that Dowling had paid pronounced attention to Doris Keating at "Prom" time last year. And, all in a blaze, Roger felt his jealousy toward Dowling surge through his veins like molten lead. There was a sudden whirring in his ears, which he fought off to catch the words of Torry Quagen, who was speaking to Keating:

"A double sawbuck that he don't make it, Keat.

I know just how slim a man's chances are, and I'll gamble that Dowling won't be in the running at the finish of the season."

"I'll make it a hundred with you, Quag," replied Tom promptly. "Is it a go?"

"Go," said Quagen quietly.

"My word!" piped Dill once more. "You must weally have thome wemarkable weason for being tho positive, Keat, old chap. If you didn't have a good weason, you'd never bet even money on a thing like that. Of courth you're good fwiends with Bwooks, and perhaps he'th given you a hint."

"Rot, Pony!" cut in Keating sharply. "Even though Brooks and I are friends, he couldn't—and wouldn't—give me anything like a tip of this sort."

"Couldn't he?" thought Roger. "Wouldn't he? By Jove! I'm beginning to see a peep of light. Tom bets a hundred that Dowling makes the eleven. And now that little ass, Dill, gives away Keating's reason for being so cocksure. Brooks is friendly to Keating. Wheels within wheels. Well, say, let them boost Dowling. I demand a square show, and if I get it I'll make Dowling work his heart out to hold on and give 'em any chance to fire me."

After that Boltwood seemed to be grimly and unemotionally watching the progress of the game. He cheered sometimes when Philbin nudged him

and urged him to do so, but, unless thus reminded, the megaphoned appeals of the cheer captain and the following thrashing movements of his arms, which brought a great volume of sound barking from the lips of the Yale men, had very little effect on Boltwood. Nor did he share the distress of those who surrounded him when Wesleyan successfully beat back the attacks of the Blue throughout the first two quarters, made an astonishing brace in the first part of the third quarter, rushed Yale more than half the length of the field, then, when held, scored a field goal.

Before the season opened many football Solons had prophesied that the new rules, by which a longer advance must be made in offense in order to hold the ball, and especially the rule permitting so much free use of the forward pass under conditions which had previously made the play unavailable, would surely enable the big colleges to stand out more strongly superior to their small rivals than they had since the old days of heavy mass play. And now, in spite of all this sage prophesying, in the very first game of the season little Wesleyan was twisting the tail of the formidable Bulldog until the poor beast seemed harried to the point of frantic foolishness bordering on complete rout.

The Yale crowd sang and cheered with more vim than ever, but there was in the greater volume

of noise made by them no such genuine rejoicing and encouragement as could be plainly distinguished in the cheering of the little band of Wesleyan men on the opposite side of the field.

During much of that third quarter, apparently becoming desperate, the warriors of the Blue pounded themselves mercilessly in the fray, driven under full steam at last by Captain Brooks. It would not do to let Wesleyan walk off with a victory, and to prevent this both Brooks and the coach flung to the wind all precautions against injuries to players In the last half of the third quarter Yale hammered a path to within five feet of Wesleyan's line, leaving the ground strewn with injured men, whose places were filled by substitutes—then heard the whistle blow before the pigskin could be put over for a touchdown.

All through that sanguinary third period, as the injured were dragged or assisted from the field, Boltwood watched for the coach to send Dowling out. It seemed certain that the man would get the opportunity to show his measure, but the whistle sounded, and Dowling was still with the untried subs.

"If it continues to run this way," thought Roger, "they'll have to use him. Why the dickens didn't they tie it up with a field goal?"

He knew the answer even as he asked himself the question. Merely to tie with Wesleyan would

be practically as bad as outright defeat; nothing short of victory would satisfy Yale.

While the two teams were changing positions, the Yale men sang as loudly as ever, thus pretending to be unshaken in their faith; but when they were not singing or cheering, they were asking one another what it all meant.

"My word!" piped Pony Dill lugubriously. "I've loth a bet to Jack Dolliver. Bet Dolly a thupper for thix that Wethleyan wouldn't thcore. Thumthing awful!"

"Don't that lisping brat make you sick!" growled Philbin in Boltwood's ear.

Roger shook his head. "He doesn't disturb me at all. He's simply amusing, or somewhat to be pitied. If he didn't have a father with four or five millions, the men he's traveling with wouldn't wipe their feet on him."

"Do you s'pose Wesleyan's really going to beat us?" questioned Philbin anxiously. "That would be an awful soaker!"

"Brooks and Red Harney will do something now. To start with, they made the mistake of thinking it was going to be too much of a snap, and even the first quarter didn't wake them up to the actual danger. They're awake now, and they will put out the strongest line-up we've got, with instructions to win or die. I think we'll win, but it won't be any victory to shout over."

Roger's judgment was verified in the final period, for the team suddenly sent out to finish the game was the strongest combination Brooks and Harney could devise. Furthermore, the captain had fired the men by an outpouring of vitriolic tongue-lashing that made them writhe and set their teeth.

The courage and backbone displayed by the Wesleyan players in their final fight to hold the advantage they had gained was of a genuinely heroic order. Again and again they hurled back the furiously charging Yale warriors. Twice they regained lost ground after being pounded well over into their own territory. But such merciless battering was bound to have effect in the end, and the visitors, lacking substitutes to fling into the battle with all the reckless abandon of Yale, were finally beaten back and back, and still back.

Even then, less than a minute of playing time remained when Yale pounded out a touchdown. The goal was kicked, giving the Blue still another point of that unsatisfactory lead, and causing the Yale crowd to cheer madly.

That was practically the end of the game; the ball was on Wesleyan's forty-yard line when the final blast of the referee's whistle declared it all over.

"They didn't dare put Dowling into the last quarter," decided Roger. "It was necessary to

play the best men they could get together. Well," he muttered aloud, amid the cheering of those around him, " 'twas a famous victory."

CHAPTER XXV

A MATTER OF DOUBT

BOLTWOOD was so constituted that it was no simple task for him to give proper attention to two different things which absorbed him greatly, and do both things well. He was trying his hardest to be faithful in his studies, but he found that football seriously interfered. His mind was divided, and not infrequently while trying to study in his room he would awaken to discover that for some time he had been sitting there dreaming over football matters. Presently Philbin detected this and spoke of it.

"You're right, old man," admitted Roger at once. "I realize that I'm wasting time, but I can't help it. I'm not like those lucky chaps who can forget a thing, no matter how much they are absorbed in it, as soon as they leave it behind for a day, an hour, or a minute. I've heard of men who were great successes in several different lines of work which they carried on at the same time, taking each line up in rotation day by day. It was said to be a very fine thing that they could do

so, for changing from one style of work to another rested and refreshed them, as golf or some such diversion refreshes the ordinary man. It seems to me they are to be envied, and I am certain, try as I might, that I could never pursue such a course. When I'm deeply interested in anything, my whole mind seems to run to that one thing, and I have to fight and struggle like the deuce to get my attention on anything else."

"I don't know," said Philbin meditatively. "I don't know whether a man who jiggers around, doing four or five different things, ever can be the success he would be if he gave his undivided energy to one big object for which he was especially qualified. Anyway, I've decided that no hard and fast rules can be laid down for every one to follow. A man has got to find out his own strength and weakness, peculiarities and qualifications, then he's got to do the best he can in his own way. In this case, though, it seems to me you should be able to take football just as the ordinary business man goes in for golf."

"Not at all," returned Roger immediately. "To the ordinary business man golf means nothing more than a little needed exercise and selfish pleasure. You yourself demonstrated to me that college football means something entirely different. There is in it something more than mere selfish ambition."

"By Jove! you're right," agreed Philbin. "I can't combat my own argument. Well, you've simply got to do the best you can, that's all. It's too bad football bothers you in your studies, but maybe you'll overcome that in time."

"I hope so. Sometimes I find, after I've come from a lecture, that I haven't the remotest idea what I've heard. Just look at this," he requested, opening a notebook. "Here are some notes taken at a lecture on philosophy. I made 'em, and, so help me Billy Patterson, I can't tell what the confounded hen tracks mean."

Philbin took the notebook and stared at the scrawling pencil marks, one of his eyebrows going up and a queer grin spreading over his face. "You don't mean to say that's writing, do you, Bolt?" he chuckled. "Why, great Scott! You're naturally such a fine penman."

"Fine!" scoffed Roger. "I don't see anything fine about my penmanship."

"But I do," persisted Philbin seriously. "There's nothing copperplate or stereotyped about it, but it's usually clean, distinct, easy to read, and expressive of strength. There's character in your penmanship, Bolt. Do you know, I've admired it so much that sometimes when I've had nothing else to do I've actually sat here trying to acquire a style like it? My own penmanship is—"

"The sort to win praise from a writing master."

"Yes, just about that sort," agreed Philbin disdainfully. "No individuality about it. It makes me sick. Your chirography bulges with individuality."

"Look here, Phil; since you opened my eyes to certain unpleasant qualities possessed by me, you've seemed to be endeavoring, at intervals, to balm my wounds. I wish you'd quit it. Every time you hand me a compliment, you remind me of the days when certain human poodles used to sit around and slop out half-cooked flattery while I spent my money on them. Occasionally I run across some of those flapdoodles, and either get the glassy eye, or see them hasten past with averted faces, fearing, perhaps, that, being busted and bumping on the rocks, I'll touch them for the price of a sandwich. Oh, I've learned a lot about human nature since Henry D. Boltwood pointed out the front door of Soundhurst to me."

"But some of your friends haven't gone back on you," Philbin hastened to say.

"Oh, no, some of them haven't. None of my real, worthy friends has gone back on me. Not all the fellows who hit it up with me in the old days were sponges and bounders and cads. Some of those men would lend me money to-day just as long as they could dig it up out of their

pockets. Oh, I've got 'em all marked. I know who they are, and I know the other kind, too."

"If you should really make the eleven—"

Roger sprang up and began stamping the length of the rug, his clenched hands behind his back. "I'll make it—by thunder! I'll make it if I'm given a show. I've had my turn at the dummy, and I've a notion that the way I hit it wasn't so rotten. Anyhow, Harney didn't trim me the way he trims some of them. And yesterday he gave me a chance to play five minutes with the scrub."

"Hooray!" cried Philbin. "You didn't tell me that. Why didn't you?"

"Because it really doesn't mean much. Dowling's been playing regularly with the scrub for the last week. Do you know, when Harney called my name I actually thought he was going to tell me I might as well quit bothering to come out for practice? I held my breath."

"But that—that would have been a raw deal. Every man is supposed to have a show."

"Some don't get it. Occasionally it's purely accidental that a man isn't given the show he should have, but in my case there may be reasons. I've warned you to keep your face closed about my suspicion that Keating has a hold on Brooks. Pony Dill gave me the hint that led me to make inquiries. Brooks is poor. He's the son of poverty-stricken parents who never provide a dollar

for his education. He's had to work hard to get where he is. Last year his playing made it seem probable that he might be chosen captain of this year's team. Tom Keating took him up. Apparently Keating's object was wholly unselfish. Apparently he admired Brinkley Brooks for the fellow's manly qualities. But Brooks hasn't been worrying over his expenses for some time. He seems to be getting along easily. I don't know that Keating has ever helped him in any way, but I have my suspicions."

"If he has, of course Brooks would feel himself indebted to Keating."

"Sure thing. In all probability, if Keating said to Brooks, 'Here's a man I want you to give every possible chance to make the team,' Brooks would do his best for that man. Now, Keating and Andy Dowling are friendly. Dowling admires Keating's sister, which shows his excellent good taste, for she's just about the finest girl I've ever put my eyes on."

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" exploded Philbin, stretching his neck and pulling in his chin until his neck looked twice as long and his chin twice as short as usual, while at the same time one eyebrow rose and quivered queerly. "It's me deadly rival! Unhand her, villain!"

Roger blushed a little. "Never talked more than five minutes with Doris Keating in all my

life,'' he promptly said; but failed to state that in those five minutes she had confessed that throughout the Traymore cup race, when he had been driving with Death perched upon his broad shoulders, she had prayed for his safety.

''Five minutes?'' said Philbin. ''An awful long while; long enough for a man to propose and be rejected four or five times.''

''The joke is in bad taste, Phil. I was speaking of Dowling. I'm not complaining of my own treatment, for I realize, now, that I'm getting the same sort of a chance as several other men who, perhaps, are as good as I am. But none of us is getting the same sort of a chance that Andy Dowling is getting, and that's what I feel like kicking about. I'm not going to kick, though; that is, outside of this room. It would do me more damage than good. If Dowling can make the team, there will be no possible question in the world but what he will have every chance to make it. All I ask is one-half the opportunity that's being given him. I'm not jealous of Andy—at least, I'm trying not to be jealous of him; and I hope he gets everything he deserves. Perhaps he doesn't know that Keating is pulling the wires for him. If he does, he doesn't deserve so much. I'm ready to give him the benefit of the doubt.''

CHAPTER XXVI

HANGING ON

YALE'S second real game of the season was with Williams, and, while the Blue showed more strength than in the Wesleyan game, Williams succeeded most annoyingly in preventing the New Haven men from piling up a huge, soul-satisfying score. It was another victory for Yale, but, like the first, not one to crow over.

Again, even though he had played on the scrub in practice, Roger Boltwood was not chosen to appear on the field with the yearning and eager band of Yale substitutes. Once more he was annoyed and made resentful by the belief that there was unfairness, against which there seemed no way of open rebellion, no method of protest that would not arouse ridicule.

"Just got to keep my teeth together and my tongue tied," decided Roger. "Can't say a word. Got to wait for my chance and make the most of it when it comes—if it ever does."

With no outward show of emotion, he saw Andy

Dowling sent into the game late in the third quarter.

On this occasion, to his satisfaction, Roger's seat was nowhere in the vicinity of the seats occupied by the Keating crowd. In truth, he had not even located them in the stand until, as Dowling started out on the field, Pony Dill rose and gave him a premature cheer.

"Somebody ought to toss some ripe hen fruit at that little brat," said Philbin. "He gets my goat."

"You're foolish to let him annoy you. He amuses me."

"There's the whole Keating outfit," said Philbin, craning his neck and peering toward the spot where Dill had been yanked suddenly down into his seat by several hands. "They're happy. They're elated because Dowling's got his chance."

"Now that he's got the chance," said Roger, "let's see what he makes of it."

Boosted, perhaps, by the cunning scheme of a conniving friend who—to those not in the secret—seemed to have no influence whatever upon football matters, Dowling likewise basked this day in the smile of Dame Fortune. For, three minutes before the end, when Freehold, of Williams, threatened to scamper through the entire Yale field for a touchdown, and the Yale crowd in the stands were gasping with dismay, it was Dowling who

tackled him and slammed him to the turf. Had Dowling missed, Williams would have scored, beyond doubt

Boltwood took part in the enthusiastic cheering for Dowling.

"Huh!" grunted Philbin. "I don't see why you should holler your head off. You had just as much right to be out there as he, and here you are looking on. In his place you might have done the same thing, and I'll bet it means that Dowling gets on as a regular substitute, if nothing more."

"All of which, though true," said Roger, "detracts not a whit from the merit of Dowling's performance. He saved us from being scored on right there, and, no matter what effect that bit of good fortune for him may have upon me, he deserves all the credit he will get."

"Boltwood," said Philbin, "I apologize. I lied when I said you were selfish."

"Not at all," returned Roger promptly. "You simply opened my eyes and set me at the task of curing myself."

After the game they both heard more than one student, in no way connected with Keating's set, express admiration for Dowling's timely tackle of Freehold, and predict that Andy would stand a fine chance of making the team.

Roger Boltwood was in no way discouraged. Even when, in practice on the days following, he

saw Dowling tried out in the line-up of the regulars, he did not permit himself to lose heart or entertain envy. He was now getting daily opportunities on the scrub, and with the disappearance of the soreness and lameness that had troubled him so much to begin with, he found that he was hardening into excellent condition, could stand no end of grilling work, and was making progress in the strategy of the game. He had never shirked, not even in those first days, when, battered and bruised though he was, the coach had kept him hurling himself again and again at the seemingly lead-stuffed dummy, until he felt every time he tackled the inanimate thing that his bones would snap or his teeth be jarred loose.

He had not shirked or faltered even for the fraction of a second when put into the rush line of the scrub and forced to fling himself against hardened, savage, tigerish regulars, whose sole object seemed to be to smash him down and stamp out his life upon the trampled turf.

Although as yet he had done nothing of a brilliant nature to attract attention to himself, the bulldog steadiness and tenacity of Boltwood had not escaped the observation of Red Harney. But to Roger it seemed that the coach scarcely knew he was on earth. He would have doubted had he been told that the coach had obtained a full record of his career, not only at Yale, but at Andover;

and to this were added some illuminating, but not complimentary, details of certain flamboyant escapades during vacation.

There was nothing in this record, save possibly Roger's performance in winning the Traymore Cup, to encourage Harney in the belief that he would develop into a football man worthy of the varsity. But Red Harney, unimpulsive, harsh, deliberate, seldom made mistakes; and he judged no man solely by his past record.

CHAPTER XXVII

SURPRISING DEPORTMENT

USUALLY when Roger came in from practice he found his roommate waiting for him. One day, however, when he came bursting into their rooms, eager to tell Martin some wonderfully good news, he found the place dark and deserted. He soon had the student's lamp glowing on the study table.

"Wonder where old Phil is?" he murmured, glancing around. "He's been acting a bit odd lately. I don't know just what to make of it. It isn't study, for he's not been hurting himself that way. He seems to have lost the interest and enthusiasm he once expressed over my progress in the fight to make the varsity He's nervous, too. Sometimes he's all up in the air, gay as a lark, and other times he's fretful and downcast, like a man worrying. I suppose it's his nature."

Shedding cap and sweater, he flung himself down at the study table and attempted to arrange a mass of scattered papers. One of those papers attracted his attention, and he picked it up, begin-

ning to read what was written upon it apparently in his own chirography:

I can see you in these first soft, warm days of October, sitting in your wheel chair on the sunny old porch, over which the woodbine has turned sear and leafless. I'm sure the hydrangeas, which are your delight and which father tends so carefully, are still blooming gorgeously. I see father poking with his cane in the fallen leaves to hear them rustle, something which always seemed to give him peculiar delight. How I'd love to be with you for just one hour one of these soft, hazy afternoons! I'm getting along splendidly this term, and my roommate, Boltwood, is one of the corkingest chaps any fellow ever had the good luck to know. I hope some time, dear mother, that you may meet him, and—

Roger stopped reading right there, his cheeks hot, his lips parting for a smile that developed into a low, suppressed laugh.

"Soft-hearted, queer old Phil!" he murmured. "Think of the flattery of having a man admire you so much that he imitates your handwriting to such a point that you are fooled by it yourself! This is evidently an uncompleted letter from Martin to his mother. Why, he was using my fountain pen, even, and the darned thing leaks. That's why I've quit carrying it."

He placed the uncompleted letter with Philbin's papers on the opposite side of the table, and settled himself comfortably with a book to await the return of his roommate. Philbin came hustling in, in the course of twenty minutes. He was flushed and excited.

"You're just in time, old fellow," said Roger, dropping his feet from the chair upon which they had been resting, and glancing at his watch. "I was waiting to tell you that we'll have to break off our pleasant dinners together at Commons."

"Hey?" exclaimed Philbin. "Break off? Why? You don't mean—"

"I've been notified that in future I must do my feeding regularly at training table," said Roger, beaming.

"Whoop! Hooray! Say, that's great! I knew you'd get there, Boltwood. Why, they can't hold a good man down. I know it by experience. I guess Tom Keating will pull in his horns a bit now, confound him! Jack Dolliver will choke. Say, you should have heard me call those two ginks."

Philbin was dancing around the room in a remarkable manner, and Roger watched him with mingled doubt and incredulity. "Call them?" he said. "Call them when? How? Where?"

"Not half an hour ago. Keating was shooting off his face about you, and Dolliver made a few remarks, also. I butted in without any invitation whatever. I told Dolliver in language he couldn't very well misunderstand just about what he was. Oh, yes, he was going to fight, but four or five fellows jumped in between us."

Boltwood rose and stared at Philbin. "What

the deuce are you talking about, Phil?" he cried. "Where did this happen?"

"In the Old Chophouse."

Roger was staggered. "The Old Chophouse on Church Street? Imperial Cæsar! You don't mean to say that you have been there? You, Philbin? Well, I'll be shot!—Say, Phil!" he added, in mock anxiety, "you don't tell me you've been drinking?"

"Oh, I only had a couple of little drinks, that's all, Rog," answered Philbin apologetically. "I was feeling so good I couldn't help it. You know I don't drink as a regular thing. I was careful this time."

"I'd as soon think of hearing that Mrs. Stevens had gone on a tear," said Roger, still dazed by the discovery. "Look here, Phil, you don't want to begin this sort of business. Why, you wouldn't last any time if you got to drinking. Besides, you can't afford it."

"Oh, I don't know," chuckled the exhilarated youth, producing a surprising roll of bills and flourishing it. "I've got some money to spend on a good time if I want to spend it."

Roger was amazed despite the fact that the affair had a humorous flavor which threatened to make him burst out laughing. "Why, you crazy cub!" he said. "Can't you realize what a fool your two little drinks have made of you? I've

never seen you waving the long green this way before. How much have you got there?"

"Oh, three or four hundred," answered Philbin proudly. "I tell you, luck has turned my way."

"Luck?"

"Yes. Perhaps it—perhaps it doesn't sound just right for me to call it luck—my aunt dying and leaving me a little legacy. Still, it was lucky for me that she didn't leave it to some one else. I offered to bet Dolliver that you'd make the team. Shook the real money right under his nose when he sneered—yes, I did."

"You offered to bet? And you've been drinking! Next thing, Philbin, you'll be gambling. Do you mean to tell me that you're in the habit of carrying around three or four hundred dollars in your pocket, that way?"

"Oh, I usually have plenty of ready money in my pocket," was the proud reply. "I suppose some chumps who don't know what they're talking about point me out as a poverty-stricken beggar. Perhaps I could flash a bigger roll than the chaps who sneer at me."

Boltwood forced his companion to a chair and made him sit down on it. "Now I'm going to hand you a few remarks straight from the shoulder, Mart Philbin," he said. "You sit there and listen. It's up to you to do so. I listened when you talked to me on a certain occasion."

"S'pose that's right," admitted Philbin, squirming a little. "Go ahead with the sermon, Bolt, old man, but for the love of suffering humanity, make it as short as possible."

"To begin with, you admit that you habitually carry a roll of money in your pocket. You have a bundle, now, that you say contains three or four hundred dollars. It's odd that a man like you shouldn't know to a dollar just how much he is carrying. You said three or four hundred with the manner of a millionaire or a spendthrift. I might have said it that way myself, a year ago. I don't understand it, for it isn't like you. We'll charge it up to the two drinks.

"Now, on the folly of packing around a roll like that," he continued. "Are you aware that more than half the real men of financial standing in New York City never carry any considerable sums of money in their pockets? Are you aware that a great many men who can count their wealth in six figures or more frequently carry less than ten dollars in ready money on their persons? As a proof of shortsighted asininity, constantly carrying a big roll of money in one's pocket is sufficient. Money carried like that is not only idle, but it becomes a menace and a temptation to all sorts of folly. Money should work, Phil. By that I mean that it should usually be put in some secure place where it will draw interest. This, of course,

does not apply to such small sums as may be needed by a person for daily, weekly, or even monthly expenses. But instead of carrying such sums in currency, the money should be deposited in a bank as an account to be drawn upon by check. That's what you should do with your money.

"Look here, I have a check book, and I have a deposit in the Northern Manhattan National. Cyrus Keating arranged that matter for me, and I'm mighty thankful that he did. It has saved me a great many dollars that I would doubtless have spent had I been carrying them loose in my pockets. When I really have to have money I draw a check on the Northern Manhattan. That's the way to do it, Phil."

Philbin blinked at the earnest lecturer with an air of mingled owlish gravity and sly inward chuckling, which, with the one uplifted, quivering eyebrow, gave him an appearance strongly provocative of mirth. Roger struggled to preserve his seriousness.

"Many a true word is spoken by the chesty," said Philbin. "Wouldn't some of your old altitude-scoring friends laugh to hear you spieling in that fashion? Granted that all you say is true, it's sometimes mighty handy for a fellow to have a roll within reach of his grapplers. It gave me a whole lot of pleasant satisfaction this evening, I assure you. Why, when I told Jack Dolliver

I'd bet you'd make the eleven, and he sneered about my offering to bet, I couldn't have called him down with a check book. Anybody can carry a check book. Shoving the real long green under his nose and letting him smell of it was a pleasure beyond words, believe me!"

"I can imagine that it was," acknowledged Roger; "but, still, what did it really get you? Dolliver and his friends will wonder how you came by the roll, and, knowing your present economical practices and your former humiliating efforts to stick in college by hook or crook, they'll decide you're a tightwad, a skinflint, a cheap skate who has money and flourishes it after taking a drink. You haven't won an atom of respect by your performance."

"Well, anyhow, I had the satisfaction of standing up for my friend and roommate when I heard a lot of envious backbiters tongue-stabbing him. That was something."

"I appreciate your loyalty, Phil, but I'm sure you don't understand how little the backbiting of such fellows bothers me. Dolliver proved himself a cheap bounder the moment he got the idea that I had joined the Down-and-Out Club. Keating is an enemy on account of an old grudge."

"You're not as sensitive as I am," protested Philbin, shaking his head sharply, and stopping with an abrupt expression of alarm that again

threatened to make Boltwood laugh. "You've always been in such a position that you could afford not to care what people said. With me it is different. I'm naturally sensitive, and being poor has made me supersensitive, I suppose. Lots of times my mother has said to me: 'Mart, my boy, you're too sensitive, much too sensitive for your own good. You're too fine-grained to rub against the raw edges of life.' Now, isn't that just like a mother? She's always thinking of me. Only son, you know. Poor mother! She's never had things any too easy. I can see her now sitting in her chair with her head leaning back and her eyes closed behind the spectacles, thinking—thinking of me. I tell you, Bolt, old man, a fellow who has a mother like that is lucky. She builds ideals for me, and it's up to me to live up to those ideals as far as in me lies."

Philbin's chin, which, Roger noticed for the first time seemed to be slightly lacking in strength, began to quiver, and there was a suspicious moisture in his eyes. Also, into his voice had crept a husky note, and he choked a little over those final words.

Any emotional display of this sort always made Roger feel foolish and embarrassed, and he hastened now to cut it short.

"You'll be getting a reputation as a high roller yourself if you frequent that Chophouse and places

like that, Phil. Next you'll take to Heub's. Quit it! Put all the money you can into a bank, shun John Barleycorn on every occasion, and don't mind any tittle-tattle you may hear about me. I've got to hike for dinner."

"I shall miss you, Bolt," said Martin. "I've been waiting for and expecting this very thing, yet, now that it's happened, I can't help feeling as if something had come between us, as if there was a change, and it never was going to be again just the same as it has been. One time there was a great big gap between us because you were a rich student, and I was a poor one. Fortune sort of bridged that gap, but now something is happening to split us again. You'll go on climbing up and up. You'll make the eleven. You'll become popular and sought after by a set of fellows to whom a common grind like me means nothing. Socially, you'll rise again mighty fast, while I, having no qualifications to boost me, will stay right where I am. Of course, that means that we'll drift apart and—"

"Oh, rot, Phil!" interrupted Roger sharply, as he yanked on his sweater and caught up his cap. "Don't talk such maudlin truck. Two little drinks have certainly put you on the fritz. Quit worrying the soft pedal. See you after dinner."

CHAPTER XXVIII

SOMETHING WRONG

NEXT day, although he made no reference to his condition of the previous night, Philbin seemed ashamed and penitent. Boltwood was the last fellow to "rub it into" a man who had made a little slip, and, therefore, he refrained from hinting, even, that anything had been wrong with his roommate.

Later, after coughing and floundering about the bush a bit, Philbin suddenly blurted:

"Much obliged for your advice about money matters, Bolt. I've taken it, and I'm going to deposit all my loose dollars with a safe concern that I know in New York."

"Good," said Roger. "That's the thing to do."

As they no longer ate together, and Roger spent some time almost every afternoon at football practice, the pair saw less and less of each other. They seldom attended the same lectures at the same time, and the formerly studious Philbin gradually abandoned his habitual plugging which had caused him to be classed as a grind. Fur-

thermore, he took to going out nights. When this attracted Boltwood's notice, and he spoke of it in a casual manner, Philbin promptly explained that he was tutoring a worried freshman who was trying to work off conditions—an explanation which satisfied Roger for the time being.

Happily, Boltwood was a good sleeper. When he retired for the night he always "hit the tick hard," and insomnia had never bothered him since the two nights immediately following his sudden split with his father. Nevertheless, occasionally he was vaguely aware that Philbin had come in, and was disrobing stealthily, hours after a sedate retiring time.

In the early days of their association Philbin had always been the first to awaken and rise in the morning. Slowly, but surely, there came a change. Roger was presently the one to awaken and spring up, refreshed and feeling like a fighting cock, while Martin continued to snooze heavily, and showed signs of weariness unconquered. If aroused, he would yawn and fret, rub his heavy eyes, and growl and grumble; then, perhaps, he would fling himself face to the wall, with the snappish announcement that he was going to get another wink, finished with an adjuration for Boltwood to be as quiet as he could and get out as soon as possible. He was forever growling about chapel.

Returning from the field at night, in the brief lull before dinner, Roger sometimes found Philbin in their rooms and observed that he seemed to be in much better spirits than during the earlier portions of the day. But there was something wrong with Philbin; Boltwood felt it vaguely, but was so absorbed by his own affairs that for a long time he failed to give the matter any thorough, serious thought.

In Yale's game with Syracuse, Dowling was put in as regular left tackle in the place of Carl Treadmore, who had a badly twisted knee. Roger was now one of the subs, but, still feeling that some influence was pushing Dowling ahead, and holding him back, he wondered if he would ever get the opportunity he coveted.

In a lull of the game, while a battered Syracuse man was being sponged and fanned back into fighting form, Roger heard his name called loudly and distinctly in the stand behind him. Turning, he looked up. After a few minutes he was attracted by Philbin, who was waving a hand at him.

"Hi, Rog!" called Martin, his face flushed and his eyes bright. "It's coming to you, old man; don't worry."

Then Boltwood noticed that Philbin's left arm was resting against the back of the man at his side, his hand gripping the fellow's shoulder.

The attitude was one of extreme familiarity, and Roger gave Philbin's seatmate a sharp look.

"I know him," he thought. "I know something about that chap. Seems to me it's something disagreeable. I wonder what it is? I can't seem to think of his name."

Immediately he spoke earnestly to one of the subs at his elbow:

"Spriggs, do you know my roommate, Philbin? Well, he's behind us in the stand, about halfway up, and directly back of us. He's sitting beside a red-headed man. Take a look, will you, and see if you know the red-headed chap?"

Spriggs turned and located Philbin after a minute of searching.

"Red-headed fellow on his left?" he said. "I should say I know him! You do, too, Boltwood."

"Thought so, but I can't remember his name."

"Engle—Carter Engle. Why, of course, you've heard—"

"Oh, sure!" exclaimed Roger, feeling a queer sensation shoot through him. "I knew I'd seen him. He's the fellow who had the public mix-up with Torry Quagen. Nearly got 'em both fired."

"But there was something back of that—something the public doesn't know about," asserted Spriggs. "Engle's a fine chap—to let alone. Anybody who runs around with him and his friend, Ainsmith, is bound to get in bad."

Roger was thinking something of this sort and wondering how it happened that a man like Philbin should be on such apparently familiar footing with the notorious Carter Engle.

"There's something wrong," he decided. "I've got to—"

"Boltwood!"

It was the voice of the coach.

"Yes, sir." Roger was on his feet in a twinkling.

"Stratton's hurt. Take his place. Go out."

With heart leaping, Roger flung aside the sweater and trotted out upon the field to fill Stratton's position as left guard. He was given the usual cheer, but ere it started he heard the shrill, joyous cry of Philbin, which was drowned immediately by the greater volume of sound.

The game was already sealed and delivered, Yale having over thirty points, while Syracuse had failed as yet seriously to threaten the goal of the Blue. Nor did the New Yorkers score. Once they became the least bit dangerous, and it was Boltwood and Dowling, working shoulder to shoulder, who repulsed the final well-planned, strategic attack which might have yielded the needed distance. There was nothing brilliant about this repulse, nothing to attract special attention to either man; but Boltwood admittedly filled the position given him by Stratton's injury. Barring acci-

dent, however, there was not one chance in a thousand that Roger could beat out Fred Stratton, the star guard of last season's varsity, for the position.

Nevertheless, Roger was happy. He felt that his chance had come through Red Harney instead of Captain Brooks, but that made little difference, and he was more than satisfied.

He did not see Philbin that evening. Even when he retired, his roommate was still absent. Along in the night he awoke and heard Philbin enter with the utmost stealth. The man undressed in the study and slipped silently into bed.

"What time is it, Phil?" asked Roger abruptly.

"Eh?" exclaimed Martin, starting. "You're awake? Why, it's just about eleven o'clock."

At that moment through the open window drifted the sound of a distant clock striking the hour, and it struck just twice. Philbin was seized by a sudden furious fit of coughing, which, however, did not prevent Roger from hearing the two distinct strokes of the clock, followed by silence.

"They'd better get that old timepiece doctored," he said; "and I'd advise you to take something for that cough, Phil. A man is liable to catch cold if he keeps late hours."

Philbin essayed no reply.

CHAPTER XXIX

BAD COMPANY

IN the days following, though tremendously busy with his own affairs, Roger noted that Philbin often seemed troubled and worried. He had spells of dejection, alternating with brief periods of something resembling elation and recklessness. Again and again Roger sought to draw him out in some clever manner, but each time Martin seemed to suspect his purpose. His suspicions aroused, Philbin invariably made some excuse to break away, and Roger was baffled.

One day Roger ran into Norry Bernfield and Irving Conklin on Church Street. Conklin pranced up in his usual effervescent manner and seized Boltwood's hand.

"Congratulations, old man, and a thousand of them," he cried. "By Jove! I didn't think you had it in you."

"I admit that I was somewhat skeptical myself," smiled Bernfield, gripping Roger's other hand and regarding him with a touch of admiration and pride.

"Notwithstanding the predictions of certain

carping skeptics," said Conklin, "I believe you're going to make the team, Bolt. Who would ever have thought of old Rog Boltwood coming out for the varsity, much less making it!"

"Look here, man alive," said Bernfield reproachfully, "what do you mean by keeping away from the club the way you do? You said you'd come round sometimes after you got sort of straightened out. They tell me you've poked your nose in there just once, and then you didn't stay—"

"I stayed long enough for five men to invite me to go out for a drink," said Roger, laughing.

"But it would be different now—now that you're in training for the eleven."

"Sure it would," agreed Conklin. "Why, even I wouldn't ask you to drink now. You've got a lot of friends yet, old man."

"Friends?" cried Bernfield; "I should say you had. And there's a raft of fellows watching you to see if you make good in this new deal of yours. Unless you let your toe slip, you'll come through with more real friends than you ever had before in all your life."

"It's mighty good of you to say that," said Roger. "I've always felt that it depended on me whether I held my friends who were worthy to be such. Bounders and cads I have no further use for."

"Oh, by the way," broke out Conklin suddenly, "that roommate of yours—I thought he was a steady-going old horse. I hadn't an idea that he was given to touching the elevations."

"What do you mean?" asked Roger quickly. "Philbin's a fine, honest, conscientious fellow, and—"

"Then he's certainly bidding for a reputation, running around with Carter Engle and Hug Ainsmith. He's got in with a bum pair."

"Is he friendly with Engle and Ainsmith?"

"Sure. He's been chumming with them for some time. That man Engle will have his hide."

"I don't understand it," said Roger soberly. "I'll have to say something to Phil. I know Engle has a bad reputation. I know he got into some sort of a scrape with Quagen last year."

Bernfield nodded his head grimly. "If Engle hadn't the cheek of a brazen image," he said, "he wouldn't be here now. I don't know the exact particulars, but he got into a fuss over cards in Quagen's rooms. Keating, Dill, Canfoil, and Enroad were present. Engle was accused of something—cheating, I suppose. Of course, there are plenty now who believe it wasn't the first time he'd been up to crooked tricks. He's a shark. He nearly always wins at cards and pool and games of that sort."

"But if they caught him cheating, caught him

with the goods, why didn't they put the knife to him?"

"In a way they did. They've all cut him out. None of them has anything to do with him."

"Yes, but they could have forced him out of college."

"There's where the queer part of it comes in. I understand that he dared them to tell a word of what had happened—to breathe a hint of it outside that room."

"But," said Roger, "any man who is caught cheating—"

"Can be ostracized and forced out of college—if he's caught by honest men. Engle had something on one or more of that bunch—something that would put them on the blink if he saw fit to use his knowledge. They didn't dare force his hand, and that's why he's still here."

"Rotten!"

"Decidedly rotten," agreed Bernfield. "You're not to quote me in this matter, Bolt, for what I've told you has come solely from rumors picked up piecemeal. I couldn't back anything up with proof, and I would never have said as much only that Conk brought it up by speaking of the friendship of your roommate with Engle. Ainsmith's a man off the same pattern as Engle."

"And Phil is running around with that pair, eh?"

"He's been seen with them time after time. He's taken to hitting the booze a little, too. Couldn't help it in that crowd. Has he got any money?"

"A little, I think. No great amount."

"Well, he won't have it long, and when he's busted you'll see him dropped by Engle and Ainsmith."

This talk caused Roger to form a prompt resolution, and he lost no time in attempting to give Philbin some much-needed advice. Even though he approached the matter as diplomatically as he could, Philbin made various attempts to turn the drift, ending by snatching up his hat and starting to go out.

Roger sprang forward and placed his back against the door.

"Wait just a minute, Phil," he urged, his hand upheld, palm outward. "You've dodged every time I've tried to talk with you lately. I've got to say something now, and you've got to listen. You're running around with Engle and Ainsmith —two men who have a bad reputation. They're high steppers, and they've been—"

With his face flaming, Philbin cried furiously:

"You're a fine fellow to give advice, now, aren't you? You had some reputation as a high stepper yourself. Simply because you got in bad with your old man and couldn't keep up the pace

you'd been following, you think you have a right to hand out the fatherly to me. Now, just let me get out of here, will you?"

Roger's face had lost much of its color, and his jaws had settled together like the jaws of a vise slowly brought under pressure. Into his eyes there came a look of deep resentment. So this was the way his good intentions were received by Martin Philbin!

He stepped aside at once, his scornful eyes traveling from Philbin's face to his feet, and back again.

The fellow choked, seemed to wither beneath that glance, and bolted from the room.

"Go on," muttered Roger, as the door slammed, and Philbin's footsteps died out in the distance. "Go to the deuce if you insist on it! I've tried to do my duty."

But later, when the indignant fires had cooled in his veins, he began worrying again over Philbin.

One night, instead of going to bed after studying, Roger put on an old coat and slouch hat, and followed Philbin. He saw his roommate meet Engle in front of Heublein's. They paused but a moment ere setting off together, like men who were bound for some definite place. There were many people on the streets, and Roger's effort to follow them without giving himself away finally

came to naught. Whether they turned down a side street or not he could not say, but, anyway, he lost track of them.

"It's a rotten shame," he muttered, again in his room, and pacing up and down the rug. "Phil is a fellow with good, clean morals and the best intentions, but he's easily influenced. It's a shame on his mother's and father's account, if not on his own. When I think of his mother, a helpless paralytic, waiting for him to come back from college, it gets me hard. I've got a duty toward Phil, and I've got to do it, even if I have to break his fool neck in order to make him see what an ass he is."

He went to bed, and, for all of his disturbed condition, soon fell asleep. He did not sleep long, however. Waking, he listened for the sound of Philbin creeping into those rooms as he had crept so many times of late. Then, hearing nothing, he struck a match and looked at his watch on the chair near the bed, and was astonished to find that it was only four minutes past eleven.

Again he tried to sleep, but it was impossible. After twisting and turning for nearly ten minutes, he jumped up suddenly, struck a light, and began dressing.

"I've just got to get out," he growled. "I'd give a lot to know where Phil is. I reckon I may have to step on Engle's neck. Don't know how

I'm going to find an excuse to do it, but I'll find it, if necessary."

Having dressed, he descended to the campus. A cold wind was groaning through the elms and raking down the brown leaves in fitful showers. In another week the trees would be absolutely bare. Here and there lights gleamed in dormitory windows. Some fellows brushed past on the way to their rooms.

Roger's footsteps were guided wholly by chance. Why he left the college buildings behind, struck into the streets of the town, and finally made his way directly to a certain restaurant where, on past occasions, he had sometimes spent hilarious midnights himself, he could not imagine. At the head of the stone steps leading down into this restaurant he paused.

"If I'm seen again down there, they'll think I've broken loose," he muttered, with a short laugh. "Don't know why I should go in, anyway, but I've got a feeling that I want to. I'm going to take a peep, at least."

Descending, he pushed open the door. As he did this, to his ears came the sudden sound of excited voices in angry altercation. In a moment an uproar arose. The chorus of angry masculine voices was punctuated by sharp feminine screams of alarm. There was a crash, a smash, a sound of battle.

Boltwood had pushed in until he could get a full view of what was taking place. Some young women had risen from various tables and retreated from the knot of fiercely fighting students, whom a few waiters vainly tried to check. One woman, heedless of danger, was clinging to a husky youth, begging him to stop. Deaf to her appeals, he lunged savagely into the midst of the turmoil.

Chairs were upset on the tiled floor; a table crashed over with all its dishes and food.

Then Roger discovered Philbin. He was there with Engle, Ainsmith, and another chap who seemed sadly the worse for drink. The four were beset by Tom Keating and seven of his friends.

Roger's eyes gleamed as he saw Philbin, his back against a pillar, trying to keep off Jack Dolliver and Bat Hopkins. Hopkins was reputed a slugger, and before Boltwood could reach him he had bruised his knuckles against the pillar with a blow that would have knocked Philbin senseless had the latter not ducked in time.

Roger gave Hopkins his first attention. With all the strength he could master, he smashed the fellow on the jaw, throwing the weight of his body into the blow. Hopkins was literally lifted from his feet and knocked clean over the top of one of the restaurant tables.

Startled, Dolliver whirled and found himself face to face with Roger.

"You!" he gasped. "Where did—"

"Never mind, Dolly," said Roger, smiling grimly; "never mind where I came from; I'm here. Look out for yourself."

Then he feinted once, shot a fist under Dolliver's upthrown guard, and knocked him down.

At this moment there arose through the restaurant a cry which made Roger's teeth come together even more tightly:

"Police! Police! The cops are coming!"

CHAPTER XXX

A PIGEON TO PLUCK

ROGER BOLTWOOD knew well what it meant to be arrested in a restaurant brawl. The students taken into custody might get much unpleasant notoriety through the publication of their names, if nothing worse happened to them. Of course, simply paying a police-court fine would seem like a joke to most of the chaps who were participating in that row; but, putting aside the question of court costs, Roger knew that in his case it might mean suspension from the team; it might mean his instant ostracism by those who regarded him as under observation.

The waiters had swarmed into the room in an effort to subdue the fighting students. There was only one flight of steps leading up to the main street, and, turning in that direction, Boltwood was appalled to catch a glimpse of blue coats and brass buttons.

"Trapped!" he murmured. "Great Cæsar! This is bad business!"

Some of the frenzied combatants were still fighting fiercely. Carter Engle, his face flaming al-

most the color of his hair, had his hands fastened on the neck of Torry Quagen, upon whose lip there was a splotch of blood. Quagen was beginning to gasp for breath as Engle forced him backward amid the dishes upon the table. At this point Tom Keating reached Engle, and struck him a fierce blow with all the force he could put into the punch.

Then the policemen came rushing in.

"Here, Phil!" cried Roger, gripping his roommate's collar and dragging him hurriedly toward the rear of the room. "This way! It's our only chance."

"Hold on, hold on!" spluttered Philbin excitedly. "I saw Keating hit Carter. I—"

"Come on, you infernal idiot!" ordered Boltwood. "You saw the cops, too, didn't you? Well, get a move on, or you'll take a ride in the 'Black Maria.' "

A huge figure in white, with a white cap on his head, suddenly pushed through the swinging doors leading to the kitchen, and stopped, barring the way. It was Fucino, the chef.

"Stop!" he roared, flinging up his hands. "Stop there! You get by me—no!"

"Out of the way!" snapped Philbin, who seemed suddenly smitten by a frantic desire to fly. "Clear the road, or you'll get your face smashed!"

Boltwood collared Martin again, and brought him up with a snap. "Steady!" he cautioned. "Leave this to me, you blind chump! Look here, Fucino," he said, addressing the chef in a familiar manner, "you know me?"

"Why, ees eet Mr. Boltwood?" exclaimed the chef, in apparent surprise.

"Sure! Fucino, some students have picked up a nasty row, and the police are coming in. My roommate here got mixed up in the scrap. I've got to get him out in some way. Take us through the kitchen, will you? Here's something for you."

While speaking Roger produced a two-dollar bill, which he slipped into the willing hand of the chef. In the old days, when he had been a frequent patron of that restaurant, many a time a waiter had taken his order direct to Fucino, who never failed to give it the most careful attention, knowing that Boltwood, if pleased, would send down a tip which would amply repay him for his trouble.

"This way—queek!" said Fucino, beckoning and diving back through the swinging doors.

They followed him through a passage that finally brought them into the kitchen, and in less than a minute he was letting them out by a back door that opened upon a dark rear yard.

"It ees all right now, Mr. Boltwood," he said.

"You keep off the main streets and the police see you not. Good night."

"Good night, Fucino," said Roger gratefully. "I'm not worrying about what happens to the bunch in there. They're no friends of mine, you understand."

They had left the yard and reached a back street when the clanging of the patrol-wagon gong grew louder and louder as it clattered up to the front of the restaurant. Philbin, leaning on Roger's shoulder, seemed on the point of breaking into tears.

"Rotten shame!" he declared thickly. "They'll pinch Carter and Hug." All at once he jerked himself up stiffly and made a move to turn away. "Got to go back, Bolt, old man—just got to," he said. "Can't run away and leave m' friends this fashion. Cowardly."

For the third time Roger collared him. "Lots of good it would do now for you to go back there and let the cops pile you into the hurry cart. There's sense in that, isn't there, Philbin? Are you particularly anxious to cough up your good money at the invitation of a police-court justice?"

Philbin wilted. "Don't s'pose it would do any good to go back," he groaned. "Still, I'll always feel that I was a coward to sneak the way I did. Engle'll never forgive me."

"It's a good thing if he doesn't—a good thing

for you," said Roger as he led the lamenting fellow hurriedly away through streets which took them by a roundabout course to the vicinity of the college. Philbin's steps were somewhat unsteady. When they reached the rooms in Lawrence he slumped down on a chair, still reproaching himself for abandoning his late companions in time of need. Having put on the lights, Roger looked Philbin over reproachfully, although he repressed any show of commiseration, and uttered no words of censure.

"How'd it happen that you fellows got into the mix-up, Phil?" he asked. "What have you been doing this evening?"

"Oh, just shooting a few games for amusement," was the answer, which Philbin seemed to regret the moment the words had passed his lips.

"Shooting a few games! Games of what, Martin? Do you mean that you've been playing pool with Engle and his pals?"

"Oh, yes—just a—a little," faltered Philbin. "Feller has got to have some amusement, you know. He can't grind all the time. You've gone out for football, and that fixes you all right."

"Go on," urged Roger. "How did you get into that restaurant, and what started the scrap?"

"Oh, after we'd played a while somebody proposed having a rabbit. I was hungry myself—hungry as a bear. We dropped in there for a bite,

and the waiter put us down at the next table to Canfoil and Fitzgerald, who were with a couple of skirts. You know Canfoil and Fitzgerald? They're friends of Keating. It seems that Engle hasn't any use for them, and he certainly does hate Keating's whole bunch. I noticed Canfoil and Cart looking daggers at each other before the other bunch came in. Canfoil made some sort of a slur, and Cart told us, loud enough for the fellow to hear, that some slippery people always tried to throw the hooks into others."

"A fine pair to be passing such remarks!" said Roger scornfully.

"Then the other bunch rolled in," Philbin continued. "There were six of them, and, counting Canfoil and Fitzgerald, they were just two to our one. That didn't make any difference to Engle. When Quagen shot off some sort of a nasty fling Cart took it right up. I thought they were half joking at first. Didn't get hot myself till Quagen sneered at me direct—called me a poor fool of a sucker. Next thing I knew the go was on. They were at it. Of course I did my best to stand by my friends. Didn't know I could really fight much, but I guess I'd held up my end if that big slugger, Hopkins, hadn't come to Jack Dolliver's aid."

Suddenly he burst into a fit of convulsive laughter. "My, my!" he choked. "You s'prised them

some! Bat Hopkins didn't know what hit him. And, say, after telling Dolliver to look out, you handed him one that put him to the tiling quicker than a wink. He used to be one of your chums, didn't he?"

"I reckoned him as such once on a time," admitted Boltwood. "He was one of the first to desert when he thought I was down and out."

"Well, you certainly gave him something to remember you by. They say Hopkins is a fighter. Perhaps he'll come after you, looking to get even."

"I know he has a reputation as a slugger," said Roger, "but I've noticed that many of these reputed sluggers are simply big, blustering bullies with a yellow streak in them."

Philbin dragged himself to his feet and seized Roger's hand. "It was fine of you, old man—fine to stand by me the way you did. But where in thunder did you come from? How in the name of magic did you get there? Why," he went on, as if just realizing it, "you ought to be in bed now. You should have been abed these two hours. I don't understand it."

"Sit down—sit down again, and I'll explain," said Roger. "I tried to talk to you a day or two ago as one friend to another—and you wouldn't listen. I listened when you gave me a line of straight talk not so long after we began rooming together; I listened, and I think I profited by it.

Instead of listening to me when I meant everything for your own good, you blazed at me like powder, and rushed off in a huff."

"That's right; mebbe I did," admitted Martin, as if a bit ashamed. "But don't let's talk about it now."

"I'm going to talk to you now, Phil. I know you're not quite sober, but still you haven't been drinking enough to prevent you from understanding what I have to say, and remembering it to-morrow. I might put it off until you were wholly sober, but we're both busy, and there's no telling when I'd say it if I deferred the matter."

Philbin writhed a little in his chair. "Oh, all right," he groaned. "Go ahead—only don't knock my friends. I can't stand for that. Give me the hammer good and hard, but spare my friends."

"Whatever knocking I do," said Roger, "I can back up, and I shan't spare your friends—as you call them—as long as I know I'm speaking the truth and speaking it for your good. You can see what associating with such men nearly got you into to-night. They were arrested, and but for me you'd be with them now. I can prove to you that they are mighty poor friends for any man to have; I can prove that a man is better off with no friends at all than such as they.

"Now, don't interrupt me, Philbin," he continued, "for it will simply force you to listen longer. I'm going to have my say, and then I'm done. If you refuse to take my advice, if you persist in being just what Torry Quagen called you—a sucker—I can't help it. Carter Engle is a crook. He was caught cheating at cards in Quagen's room last year. That's the trouble between those two men. That's what brought about the clash to-night. It's an old sore, but apparently still raw."

"Engle's a good fellow, Bolt. He sticks up for you. He says you're all right. He says you ought to make the team if you have a square show. I've never heard him whisper a word against you, and now you're—"

"All diplomacy and slick work to fool you, Philbin. Engle has sized the situation up. He knows how you feel toward me, and he's playing on your sympathies. He's a pool shark as well as a crooked card player. I'm not going to ask you how much money you lost to Engle playing pool to-night, but I'll bet anything I have that you did lose money to him."

Philbin was silent.

"That's what he's after, Phil—your money. You flourished your roll, and he heard that you had it. He picked you out as a pigeon to pluck, and he's begun plucking you. The minute he's

got you trimmed to the pinfeathers he'll drop you. You might just as well get your money—all you have—together in one roll and hand it to him. That's all I've got to say."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE NEED OF MONEY

AS usual of late, Roger was the first to rise the following morning. In his bed, Philbin drowsed, mumbling and breathing heavily, with occasional choking catches and faint groans. On a chair beside the bed was a water pitcher, its absolutely empty condition telling the story of the restless sleeper's repeated efforts throughout the night to quench inward fires.

Half dressed, Boltwood stopped beside his roommate's bed, and stood looking down at the sleeper somewhat regretfully. The unnatural flush had departed from Philbin's face, leaving behind the unhealthy pallor of reaction following stimulants. His mouth was open, and now and then there was a jerking, convulsive movement of his lower jaw—the jaw which Roger had already decided was just a trifle too short for the rest of Philbin's face.

"Too bad," murmured Boltwood, suddenly feeling a surprising amount of affection for Philbin. "He's the last fellow I'd thought it of, but one never can tell. Perhaps it won't do him any great harm, and it may do him considerable good. We

all have to learn by experience. Others may warn us, and give us straight tips that would save us no end of trouble if we followed them, but we ignore everything of the sort, usually with the idea that it will be different with us. I know how it is. I've had mine, and I suppose I'll have to taste more of it in other ways before I get good sound sense. A fellow like Phil can't stand up under a great deal of it. It undermines the better nature of such a chap. I've got to look after him closer. Perhaps he'll pay some heed to what I said last night. I hope so."

He had finished dressing and was on the point of going out, when Philbin, who had for some minutes pretended to be sleeping, slowly lifted his head and sat up, groaning a bit.

"Just a moment, Bolt, old man," he called. "Got something I want to say to you."

Roger came from the study, and stood beside the bed while Philbin held on to his head with both hands.

"I'm feeling rotten this morning," acknowledged the unfortunate man. "Don't say anything, will you, Rog? Seems like my head would split. And I didn't drink more than half as much as the other fellows. I must be a softy. I'm going to cut it out, Rog. Yes, I am—honestly. I can't even be a good fellow; 'tain't any use for me to try."

"This being a good fellow in the way the term is often applied seldom gets a man anything but a big head and an empty pocket," said Roger, in such a seemingly cheerful way that Philbin was both relieved and disappointed. "Most good fellows die poor."

"Guess you're right, old man. I've spent too much myself lately, but I'm done with that foolishness. It was corking of you to pull me out of that scrape last night, and I won't forget it. That's what I wanted to say to you. I won't forget it, Rog."

"I'd much rather you'd forget that than forget what I said to you about the men you were with—your self-styled friends."

"They'll believe I sneaked," groaned Martin. "Perhaps they won't believe me when I tell them just how it was. I can't help it if they don't. Oh, this head of mine!"

He dropped back heavily on the pillow, but declared, when Roger asked if he could do anything, that all he desired was to be left alone.

On his way to breakfast Boltwood bought a morning paper, pausing on a street corner to run his eye over the headlines. He looked in vain for any mention of the midnight brawl in the restaurant.

"Suppressed it somehow," he muttered. "Keating and Fitzgerald must have a pull with

the reporters. Don't believe the rest of the bunch could keep their names out of the newspapers."

Later, however, an afternoon paper, bought near midday, did contain something concerning the affair, and Roger smiled as he discovered the little two-inch item tucked away in the corner of an inside page, under the heading: "Skylarking Students Squelched."

According to the item, a few students, dining merrily near midnight, had aroused the ire of some half-intoxicated men of rather tough appearance, who had fancied the collegians were making sport of them. The starting of the fight was blamed wholly upon the toughs, who, the paper stated, took flight and escaped when they heard that the police were coming. The students, declining to run away, were carted off to spend the night in cells; but they had all been discharged with a reprimand when arraigned before Judge Dittenhall. The names of the arrested ones were not given.

"Keating's pull held good," thought Roger. "If they had chanced to be some poor dubs with unknown and uninfluential parents, they would have been proclaimed as young rowdies by the newspapers. It isn't a square deal, though I didn't realize it once."

To Boltwood's satisfaction, Philbin actually seemed to settle down and become more like his

former self in general steadiness and habits of study. Nevertheless, he wore a troubled face, and at times Roger caught him gazing into vacancy with an anxious, far-away look in his eyes. Not caring to "harp" on a matter doubtless disagreeable to Martin, Roger had refrained even from asking him what Engle and his associates had to say about the affair in the restaurant and Philbin's escape from arrest.

"If he wants to tell me about that he will," thought Roger. "If he doesn't want to tell, let him keep still."

Suddenly, after one of those trance-like spells, Martin, coming back to earth, turned to Roger, and asked:

"How is it that some men are able to make so much money apparently without working for it? You know some of 'em do, Bolt—never seem to try for the dollars, which come rolling in just the same. There's a way to do it. The men who get wise to the trick have barrels of the needful, while the ones who don't get on the inside simply have to plug their heads off for every cent they scrape up. Your father is a money-maker. It's rolled into his pockets without much effort on his part. You ought to know how the trick is worked."

"Now, Phil," said Roger, laughing, "if you have the idea that Henry Boltwood is a man who has always basked in the smiles of Dame Fortune,

you want to dismiss it. My father worked like a dog to get his start. He told me that he began for himself on one dollar and seventy-five cents a week."

"Oh, yes!" cried Philbin. "I've heard just such stories before. All the rich men who have made their own money tell similar things. But no one can cram it down my throat that your father, beginning life on one dollar and seventy-five cents a week, saved up enough money to get a start to go into business that eventually made him rich. There was luck about it somewhere, or else he got on to the trick of netting the dollars—the trick I want to learn. I tell you, these big men speculate. They know how to do it. They know how to make a few dollars earn a good many more. The ordinary man is satisfied with four or five per cent. on his little savings. The big guns, the money-makers, are never satisfied with such dribblings. They want fifty per cent.—yes, a hundred per cent.—and they get it!"

"Sometimes they do," agreed Boltwood; "but it isn't through what you would call legitimate speculation. They seldom speculate according to the exact interpretation of the word. When they 'take a chance' with their money they usually take it on a sure thing. Everything is fixed so that, barring something no human knowledge can foresee, they can't fail to win."

"That's right—that's right!" cried Philbin. "That's just what I was saying. That's just what I want to find out about. I want to learn how they do it."

"You're an honest man, aren't you?" returned Roger. "You're the son of respectable and honest parents. The sort of speculating I've been speaking about is not honest. It's robbery in nine cases out of ten. It's getting money under false pretenses sometimes, though if it's done on a big scale the operators rarely find themselves seriously troubled by the courts. Now, Phil, old man, I've been thinking of making money myself. I was lucky last summer, or I'd not be here now. To stick and get my sheepskin, I've got to have more money, and I've got to earn it faster than a man can earn it by ordinary day labor. Coming to the matter of speculation, I've actually considered something of the sort right here in New Haven. There's a way to make quite a little pot of money and make it by speculating on a sure thing."

"Tell me how," urged Martin, his eyes shining eagerly, his tongue wetting his parted lips. "I don't want to butt in on your game, Rog, old man, but it might open my eyes to something. It might give me a tip as to how the thing is worked."

"Well, I'll tell you what I contemplated, Phil, and you'll see how easily a man can make more than one hundred per cent. on his money, do it in

a very few weeks, and actually take no risk whatever. Why, he even might not be compelled to put up a dollar of his own money to turn the trick."

"Jerusalem!" breathed Philbin. "That sounds interesting, but impossible. How could it be done, Rog?"

"The Yale-Harvard game will be played in New Haven this year. On the day of that game this town is crammed, jammed, and packed with people coming from everywhere. Now, don't get the idea that I'm talking about ticket speculation. It's not that. It's another scheme, however, of a similar nature. Many of the people who come on for that game travel long distances, and stop in town one or more days and nights. To do so they've got to have rooms at the hotels. Every year people who are wise engage those rooms a long time in advance. They send in to the hotels and make their arrangements for accommodations, and long before the day of the game everything has been gobbled up. After that the man who gets accommodations at a hotel has to pay a premium. See it, Phil?"

"Why, yes. You mean—"

"If a man isn't troubled by scruples and wants to make a fat thing on the day of the game, all he has to do is get control of as many good hotel rooms as possible, and sell them at such a pre-

mium as he can obtain from people with plenty of money and not enough foresight to secure their accommodations in advance. I thought of doing this myself. I've plenty of friends who would send in and engage rooms. Any one who makes the trick pay an amount worth working for must have such friends."

"It's a great game, Rog. You don't mean to say you've given it up?"

"Yes."

"I don't see why."

"Don't you? Then I'll tell you why. It's obtaining money under false pretenses, Phil. The friends I'd get to engage those rooms wouldn't have any intention of using them. The whole scheme would savor of crookedness, which I don't relish."

"Oh, but it wouldn't be any crookeder than lots of things regarded as legitimate in business. Now, would it?"

"No, it wouldn't," admitted Roger.

"Then I don't see why you should be so finicky."

"Don't you?"

"Sure I don't. And look here—if you've actually given up the idea, why can't I go into it? I want to make some money somehow."

"Have you plenty of friends who will help you out?"

"Um—no—no, I don't suppose I have," fal-

tered Martin. "But you say you have. Why couldn't your friends engage the hotel accommodations? Why couldn't you fix it for them to do so, and then let me do the rest of the business?"

"Philbin," said Roger, rising and reaching for his cap, "I'm afraid you've got me sized up wrong. Anything I wouldn't ask my friends to do for me I'm not going to ask them to do for you, that's sure. If I consider business of this nature so questionable that I won't go into it, I'm surely not going to help you pull off the stunt."

CHAPTER XXXII

ROGER MAKES A LOAN

SOMETHING like a week later Philbin came in one evening wearing an air of mingled dejection and anger. Roger looked up from the thesis which he was at work upon, then pushed back his eye shade to survey Martin more freely.

"Bolt, you were dead right about that man Engle," Philbin announced, stopping beside the table and hitting it a crack with his fist. "He's a cheap skate."

"I had an idea you'd find him out in time."

"Oh, he proved what he is, all right. Perhaps Torry Quagen wasn't so far wrong when he called me a sucker."

Roger repressed a slight inclination to smile. "I've an idea that Quagen swallowed Engle's bait once on a time, hook, line, and sinker."

Philbin flung himself down on a chair. "It was my money he was after," he said. "When he found out that I—that is, when I told him that I was broke, he showed himself up right away. I wanted to try him, and so I—I manufactured that story. I gave him the impression that I'd lost

my money speculating. As if I would be fool enough to do that!" he finished, with a scornful curl of his lips and a derisive wave of his hand. "I wasn't born yesterday."

"So Engle handed you the frosty the moment he thought you were busted? I might have told you as much. Somehow a man never believes these things until he's had the experience for himself. One time I wouldn't have believed that Jack Dolliver would go back on me. He quit quicker than you could blink an eye, too. Oh, we learn as we grow older, Phil. It shatters our ideals, and I'm beginning to fear that it takes some of the pleasure out of life."

Apparently this experience weighed heavily on Martin's mind, for in spite of Roger's attempts to cheer him up he remained downcast; nor did he in the days to come throw off the gloom and worriment which had crept upon him. He did not go out as often nights, and there were no indications that he indulged in even the lightest sort of sprees. However, though he spent many hours in his rooms and around the dormitory, he always seemed disturbed and fretted by his studies. He did not sleep well. Some nights he twisted and tossed from the time he retired until gray morning crept in at the windows.

Meanwhile, Boltwood had something to worry over himself. As a substitute he had seemingly

made himself solid on the team, but this gave him no assurance that he would get into the final big game of the year, which was something he had resolved upon. There was a chance, but apparently it had narrowed down to a struggle between himself and Andy Dowling to make the position of left tackle. In no game had Roger been able to prove to his own satisfaction, as well as that of the coach and captain, that he was Dowling's superior. He had worked like a horse, never faltering, never letting up, undaunted by anything; yet Dowling had kept pace and pace with him. This success of his rival made it probable that he would win in the final struggle, for the influence of Tom Keating had to be taken into consideration.

Already the "dopesters" were figuring out Yale's chances against Harvard, using as a basis for such figures the records of the Blue and the Crimson in games that both had played already. To the unbiased it seemed that Harvard stood far the better chance to win. True, Yale had shown up amazingly well in some games, but it was equally true that slumps had followed these periods of good work—slumps so pronounced that they had alarmed the most enthusiastic supporters of the Blue. The Cambridge team seemed far more steady and reliable.

The real truth was that Red Harney was doing his best to develop a versatile team that could

meet and outplay opponents drilled in any sort of tactics. He was determined to have an eleven that would shine in offensive as well as defensive work. He was preparing the men to shift their maneuvers, if necessary, at any stage of a game. Should they find themselves checked and held while using one style of play, they would be ready to begin a new quarter, or even switch in the midst of a quarter, like a team of entirely different players, coached and trained by a wholly different set of men. Yet at no time was the solid grounding in straight football neglected for tricks and freak training.

For all of the growing uncertainty, Roger felt that he was enjoying life as he had never enjoyed it before. He was training hard, studying hard, and sleeping soundly. When he thought of the remarkable change in his habits, when he compared his present mode of life with that of a year before, he wondered that he had ever fancied himself as having a good time while idling, carousing, and turning night into day.

"And I thought I was living then!" he muttered to himself. "Why, I was an idiot! I'm just beginning to live. I'm just getting my eyes open to the real joys of life."

This satisfying conviction was emphasized when, chancing to meet Price Kilmer one morning, he noted the fellow's listless, dejected condi-

tion, and heard him comment cynically and bitterly upon the happenings of the night before.

"Great Scott, but I'm all in, this morning!" sighed the stout chap, yawning and rubbing his bloodshotten eyes. "Haven't had any real good sleep since—I don't know when; and I hardly closed my blinkers last night. Oh, yes, we had a party—one of those real parties. It makes me sick to think of it. A man has to hold up his end, you know, even with such a lush as Conklin. Conk certainly is a tank. He'll take a drink or two in the morning and come out as chipper as a lark, but the stuff gags me after I've been bailing into it all night. Of course, we wound up with a nice, quiet little game. Oh, yes, it was a nice little game for me—I don't think! I've been getting it in the neck right along lately. Those sharks trimmed me to the bone last night. Of course, I could have borrowed of any one of them, but somehow I was sore, and didn't feel like it. Besides, I've touched 'em up enough. I've got exactly thirteen cents in my jeans—unlucky number! Oh, I'll find somebody who will come across with a loan. Once on a time I'd made you cough up, Bolt, old man, but now that—"

Kilmer was one of his former friends who had not shown a disposition to go back on Boltwood because of the latter's misfortune, and, though Roger had never liked the man to the extent of

feeling real affection for him, he did not hesitate now.

"I've got some money banked, Kil," he said promptly. "I've got more than I need for immediate use, and I'll be glad to make you a loan. How much do you need?"

Kilmer seemed surprised and a bit abashed. "It makes me feel queer, borrowing from you now, Rog," he said huskily. "I'll pay you back in a week or two. Don't want much, anyhow—just enough to tide me along a few days. Can you spare twenty-five?"

"Yes—or fifty. Do you want fifty?"

"Well, of course that would—"

"Come on," invited Roger; "let's go to some place where I can write a check. I don't carry much loose money round in my pockets."

CHAPTER XXXIII

SLIPPING BACK

AS November advanced and the day of the big game drew nearer, Boltwood was given work on the team only when it was necessary to use him to fill the place of some regular player who had been injured. In this way the settled fact that he was regarded merely as a substitute became more and more evident. On the other hand, Andy Dowling had beaten out Carl Treadmore for the position of left tackle, and was beyond question one of the regulars.

"Had Keating been powerful enough to swing it," thought Roger resentfully, "he'd had me chucked into the discards long ago. He couldn't quite bring that about. But I'm satisfied that I have Harney to thank that I'm not wholly out of it. Perhaps some accident will give me a chance to get into the Harvard game, after all."

It was as left guard, a position that placed him shoulder to shoulder with Dowling, that Boltwood played occasionally when Gene Stratton's game ankle was troubling him. Stratton was the star guard of the varsity, but that ankle, hurt a year before, had never become permanently well and

strong. At times it seemed all right, but the slightest wrench would cause a setback, and even the stout brace Stratton wore was not sufficient to protect it completely.

It was no small matter of satisfaction to Boltwood that whenever the team played away from home he accompanied it as a possibly needed substitute, if nothing more. This was the next thing to being a regular, and even though he should not get into the Harvard game certainly he had made surprising strides and attained a great deal to be proud of. To add to his satisfaction, his accomplishments in his studies were equally marked, and he knew that never again would he suffer the humiliation of being dropped a year.

The feverish days immediately preceding the great game had come, and the team was practicing secretly, now being drilled solely with the object of reaching the highest point of efficiency against the Cambridge organization. Those were busy, hard-working days for Roger, giving him little time for thought of affairs which did not concern him immediately.

The tingle and thrill of anticipation permeated him. A sort of lofty spirit of valor pervaded his soul, and seemed to lift him above the level of ordinary human existence. The love for his college had sprung up within him and developed and bloomed until it was something beyond words to

describe. Life to him now had a deep, fine meaning, and he knew that always to the end of his days the spirit and influence of Yale as he now felt it would affect his career. He had progressed, and he was still growing broader and more liberal. Toward his present friends and associates he felt that unspoken, undemonstrative affection which the strongest and noblest invariably feel toward human kind with whom they have come in touch. Even toward Dowling he no longer entertained animosity or jealousy. Dowling had done well, had proven himself worthy, and Roger was willing and glad that he should partake of the fruit of his own worthiness.

It was in this spirit of good will toward men that he met Larry O'Leary on the campus one crisp, sunny day at high noon, and listened to his chaffing congratulations and praises.

"Oh, say, you make me feel foolish, Larry," he said, laughing. "I wish you wouldn't."

"But you're the wonder of the old bunch, Bolt," persisted Larry; "you're the wonder and the pride. We've talked it over a hundred times, me boy, and we all agree that you're the last man we'd have picked to do what you've done."

"I haven't done anything."

" 'On their own merits modest men are dumb.' Why, you're one of the varsity."

"Only a sub."

"Practically one of the varsity. You don't know it, of course, but there are hundreds of Yale men arguing to-day that you should be after filling a regular position, instead of some others. And you've done it in one year, Bolt. That's part of the wonder."

"Say, how are all the fellows?" cut in Roger hastily. "I'm so busy I don't see 'em often. Ran across Norry Bernfield a day or two ago. He's the same old Norry."

"Yes, we're all the same old gang," replied Larry, apparently with a touch of self-condemnation. "By the way, Bolt, it's sometimes I see your roommate in the Oval. I room there, you know."

"You see Philbin in the Oval?" exclaimed Roger. "Why, what's he doing there? He was tutoring, but now—"

"I don't believe he's tutoring Carter Engle. Engle's rooms are quite near mine. I've seen Philbin going in or coming out of those rooms several times lately."

"Lately? Are you sure? I know he was running around with that man Engle some time ago, but I thought he'd quit it. I thought he'd cut Engle, Ainsmith, and that gang out."

"He'd better cut them out. Look here, take it from me you'd better talk to Philbin. There have been queer doings in the Oval lately, and—this

is strictly *sub rosa,* Rog—Engle is under suspicion. You know, he's got a rather smutty reputation."

"What's been going on, Larry? Give me the facts."

"There's been a lot of petty thieving. Fellows have complained of losing valuables from their rooms. Hopkins and Quagen, two of Tom Keating's friends, say their rooms were looted while they were absent. I think it's Quagen who has turned suspicion on Engle. You know, there's an old grudge between that precious pair."

"You can bet I'll talk to Philbin!" said Roger earnestly. "He's a good boy, Larry, but he's easily influenced. I'm afraid I haven't looked after him as I should. He thinks the world of me, but really it's got so of late that we see amazingly little of each other."

Now, it chanced that Roger's opportunity to speak with Philbin did not come that day. Afternoon work on the field took up Boltwood's spare time, and he was given plenty to do, for Stratton put himself out by hurting his ankle in the first scrimmage.

Philbin did not show up in his rooms in the evening, and had not come in when Roger went to bed. In the morning he was sleeping like a log, and, after some consideration, Boltwood decided not to awaken him.

"He'd be in a bad humor, and I'll get an opportunity later in the day. I'll bring it round in a natural manner."

Coming from a lecture shortly after eleven o'clock, Roger encountered Price Kilmer. At sight of him Kilmer hesitated a moment, looked doubtful, then came forward, puffing as usual.

"I say, Bolt, old man," he said, "I want to see you. You know—you know that check—that check you let me have one day—"

"Yes," said Roger, wondering at the stout man's hesitation. "You paid me back the fifty more than a week ago, Kil. It's all right."

"Oh, no, it isn't that. You know, Rog, I gave that check to Storrow. He always has a lot of ready money, and he cashed it for me. He didn't bank it until recently."

"Well, go on, Kilmer. What are you stopping for?"

"The check came back."

"What's that? Came back!"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, it came back from your bank. It came back marked 'No funds.' "

Roger stared blankly. "Are you trying to put over a joke?" he asked. "Came back marked 'No funds'? Impossible!"

"That's just what happened," insisted Kilmer.

"I've got it right here. I had to take it up from Storry." Plunging his hand into his pocket, he drew forth a small bill fold, and extracted the check. Boltwood gazed at it aghast.

"There's some mistake about this, Kil," he said presently. "Why, I've got over four hundred dollars in that bank. I don't understand it at all."

"I didn't, either," gurgled Price, hunching his shoulders. "You see the check. You've got it. That's all I know. I've fixed it up with Storry."

"And I'll fix it with you, Kil," cried Roger, his face blazing. "Somebody is going to hear from me about this! I know I have over four hundred dollars in that bank. When was this returned to Storrow?"

"He got it this morning, he said. Now, don't get wrathy with me, Rog; I'm not to blame. I don't mind now, for I've got enough money. If you need—"

"I don't need a dollar, thank you, Kilmer. All I want is this business straightened out. I'm going to get word to that bank in short order. I'll send them this check, and ask what they mean by refusing to recognize it."

He hurried straight to Lawrence, where, examining his bank book and check book, he found that, according to those, he should have four hundred and three dollars and sixty-one cents in the North-

ern Manhattan. Having assured himself of this, he wrote a decidedly indignant letter of inquiry to the bank, inclosing the repudiated check.

"Ought to get word from them to-morrow," he thought. "They'll answer that in a hurry, I'll guarantee."

Out at the field that afternoon Brooks and Harney drew Roger aside for a few words.

"Boltwood," said Brooks, "it looks to me as if we'd use you in the game day after to-morrow. Stratton insists that he can play, but the doctor says he will probably make himself a cripple for life if he does. He's got an awful ankle to-day. It's puffed up almost as big as two ankles. Harney says you're the man to fill Stratton's place, and I think so, too."

Boltwood's heart was pounding like a trip hammer, and he was tingling to his finger tips.

"Thank you," he said, in a strangely quiet voice. "If I am put in Stratton's place I shall do my level best, you may be sure."

It had come to him, after all—he was to play in the great game! He was sorry for Stratton, of course, but he was overjoyed at his own good fortune.

That night he found no opportunity to tell Philbin what had happened, or to speak to him concerning the other matter. Again Philbin was out, and he was still absent when Roger turned in.

Boltwood did not go to sleep quite as quickly as usual, but after thinking happily of his luck for a while slumber claimed him.

He was vaguely aware some time later that Philbin was in the room. Even without fully waking he heard Martin moving stealthily and hurriedly around in the dark. In a short time Philbin got into his single bed, and seemed to compose himself. Not more than three minutes later Roger was aware of heavy footsteps outside, followed by a sharp knock upon the door. Philbin breathed heavily and steadily, like one fast asleep and deaf to the knocking, which was promptly repeated.

"I wonder who it is?" said Roger, getting up and striking a match. "Yes, yes! Wait a minute, will you?" he called as the rapping at the door persisted.

As soon as he had a light he unlocked and flung the door wide open. Into the room stepped Jack Dolliver, followed by Bat Hopkins, Rick Enroad, Torry Quagen, and Pony Dill. Roger gazed at them open-mouthed.

"Shut the door, Pony," said Dolliver, without taking his eyes off Roger.

Dill promptly did so, and put his back against it.

"Well," said Boltwood, catching his breath, "this is a little surprise party! I wish you'd tell

me how it happens that I'm honored by such a visit at so unusual an hour."

Dolliver took a handkerchief from his pocket. "Is this yours?" he asked, showing a monogram worked on one corner of the handkerchief.

"I believe it is," answered Roger unhesitatingly. "I don't know where you got it, but it's my handkerchief."

"Then," said Dolliver, "I'll thank you to hand back my watch and a few other articles of value. And while you're about it you'd better dig up the stuff you've stolen lately from my friends here."

CHAPTER XXXIV

STOLEN GOODS

DEAD silence followed Dolliver's amazing words of accusation. Boltwood stood quite still, as if rooted in his tracks, his eyes, wide and unblinking, fixed unwaveringly upon the eyes of Dolliver. Slowly his hands, hanging at his sides, grew tense, closing into fists. Slowly his eyelids narrowed, and his brows came together in a black frown, while the muscles stood out rigidly over his set jaw.

The five intruders still remained motionless, but suddenly Pony Dill caught his breath apprehensively, crying:

"Look out for him, Dolly! He'th going to thwike you!"

Bat Hopkins took a step which placed him at Dolliver's side, ready for action.

"He'd better not strike anybody," rumbled Hopkins. "Last time we met he hit me when I wasn't looking. I've got my eyes on him now!"

"Oh, if he wants a general roughhouse right in his rooms, let him start something," sneered Dolliver.

It was only by a remarkable effort that Roger got full control of himself and spoke in a voice which, hard as chilled steel and cold as polar ice, was surprisingly steady.

"Just what did you mean by your words a moment ago, Dolliver?" he asked. "Am I to understand that you accuse me of theft?"

"We've got the evidence right here," declared Dolliver, displaying the monogram-marked handkerchief. "You've acknowledged that it's yours. That's enough."

"It nails him," put in Quagen. "I thought he'd try to lie out of it. I thought he'd deny the handkerchief."

"I wish," said Roger, "that you'd be obliging enough to explain how it is that your possession of my handkerchief proves me to be a thief."

"He always was good at bluffing," murmured Enroad sneeringly.

"Of course you know how it is," said Dolliver, "but as long as you pretend ignorance I'll tell you. There has been some pilfering from the rooms of certain dormitories lately, and various students have lost valuables which they treasure. Quagen was one of the sufferers."

"Four stickpins, one of 'em a diamond horseshoe, a ring, and a gold cigarette case," enumerated Quagen.

"Up to the present time," Dolliver went on, "all

efforts to catch the thief have been unavailing. It chanced to-night that Enroad and I were out for the evening, but we came back earlier than we had expected to. I was surprised when, after fumbling with the key in the lock of my door, I finally discovered that it was unlocked all the while. The room was dark when we entered. I had a feeling that something was wrong. Suddenly, before the lights were turned on, some one sprang out from concealment and made a dash for the hall. I grabbed the fellow, and we had a scuffle. By the dim light from a distant lamp outside, which came through the open door, I saw that the man I'd grabbed was wearing a handkerchief tied over the lower part of his face. Calling to Enroad, I snatched that handkerchief and jerked it off. Just at that moment the fellow gave me a desperate trip and a slam against the edge of the door that raised a bump on the back of my head and stunned me. When I came round I found myself sitting on the floor alone. Enroad chased the thief down the stairs. The man could run like the dickens, and he got away. Enroad came back. We investigated, and found that my watch—which I didn't happen to be carrying, as I'd dropped it and put it out of running order—a couple of scarfpins, a locket containing a picture —a present to me—and some old coins Enroad had picked up at various times were missing.

The thief had slipped right through our fingers, but we had the handkerchief he was wearing for a mask. You've acknowledged that the handkerchief is yours."

Again there was a period of silence. Roger, after fixing Dolliver steadily with his eyes, suddenly flashed a glance to the faces of the other men, as if seeking to catch them off guard and discover something in that manner.

"You all seem to be serious about this business," he said slowly, after taking a deep breath. "If I thought this was a job you'd put up on me we certainly would have one roaring old mixup right here. I know you haven't any love for me, Dolliver, and naturally your friends feel the same as you do. I don't know how the thief in the Oval happened to have one of my handkerchiefs in his possession, but I tell you now, on my word of honor, that I've been in my bed since five minutes to ten. I'm telling you this calmly when I feel a blamed sight more like inviting you all to go straight to blazes."

"He can't wiggle out of it that thort of a way," lisped Dill.

"It chances, Boltwood," said Dolliver, "that we know your circumstances are such that you're in need of money. You came back to college on a bluff, thinking that perhaps your old man would give in and furnish you the needful before the

time came when you had used up the little pot you made by driving in that automobile race. Things haven't panned out that way. You're down to bed rock. You've even been passing worthless checks."

It seemed that the hot blood would burst from Roger's cheeks. He felt himself quivering from head to food with indignation and anger almost ungovernable.

"So Price Kilmer has told you about that check, has he?" came hoarsely from his lips. "I didn't think that of Kilmer."

"Ha!" squawked Dill exultantly. "He confetheth it! He owns up!"

Roger laughed bitterly. "I've confessed nothing. The incident of that check came through some wretched blunder at the bank. I have a deposit of several hundred dollars there. As for this accusation of theft, it's absolutely ridiculous. Likely you fellows, having no love for me, will try to make a lot of capital out of it; but you can't prove such a foolish charge against an innocent man. I think you'd better get out."

"Wait!" said Dolliver, holding up his hand. "We were friends once, Boltwood, and, no matter what's happened, I should really hate to think you had fallen as low as the evidence seems to indicate."

"Thank you," said Boltwood sarcastically.

"If you're innocent," Dolliver went on, "you'll be perfectly willing for us to search these rooms. If we do make a search and find no trace of any stolen property here, I myself shall be willing to give you the benefit of the doubt."

"Rather generous of you," murmured Boltwood, in the same cutting manner. "As little as I respect you and the bunch with you, I hardly think you'd make a 'plant' here to fix a crime upon me. My natural disposition is still to order you out, but I'm going to let you search instead. I'm going to give you a chance to rake over every nook and corner of these rooms. When you've done so, and failed to find any stolen property, as you will, I shall invite you once more to get out of these rooms—and, believe me, you'll go out in a hurry if you're not looking for broken heads. Now, search!"

At this juncture Philbin appeared, pale-faced and wild-eyed, peering forth from between the slightly parted portières of the bedroom.

"What's the matter, Rog?" he asked, staring blankly at the unwelcome visitors. "Thought I heard voices, but couldn't believe there was any one here. What's up? What's wanted?"

In the fewest possible words, Roger explained, ending with the statement that Dolliver and his friends were going to search the rooms.

"Search—search our rooms!" snarled Philbin.

"As if we were a couple of crooks who had been mugged and numbered! Well, I should say not! I won't stand for it!"

"Yes, you will, Phil," said Roger almost gently. "We'll let them search, and then we'll invite them to fade away suddenly."

Still Philbin protested angrily against the outrage. After a time Roger suppressed him, and the visitors began a systematic search. They made it very thorough, starting with the study, and finding nothing there to back up the charges brought against Boltwood. From the study they moved into the bedroom.

"The three upper drawers of that dresser," said Roger, "belong to me. Philbin has the two lower drawers."

Dolliver and Quagen went through the top drawer, and began on the second. Suddenly Dolliver, unfolding some flannel shirts, uttered a smothered exclamation. A moment later he was holding up a watch and several scarfpins which had been tucked away in the shirt.

"My watch!" he said, his voice breaking a bit, as if the discovery genuinely shocked him.

"The scarfpins swiped this very night!" cried Enroad, quickly examining them.

Roger was thunderstruck. Without a word, he watched them rummage through the remainder of the drawer and bring forth a locket and more

than a dozen old coins. Still speechless, but doing some heavy thinking, he made no objection while they ransacked the remainder of the dresser, poked into the wardrobe, went through clothing, looked between the mattresses, literally tore the room up without finding another thing.

"We've got what he lifted to-night," said Quagen triumphantly. "Of course he's disposed of the rest of the plunder. He didn't have time to get rid of this, we followed him up so closely."

A choking sound like a smothered sob caused Roger to turn sharply and discover Philbin gazing at him with eyes apparently tear-dimmed and full of unspeakable grief and regret. It seemed all too evident that Martin believed him guilty and was suffering tortures because of that belief.

The triumphant searchers were ready to go.

"I'm sorry, Boltwood, old man," said Dolliver, pausing a moment ere he followed the others, who were filing out. "Perhaps you won't believe me, but I really am. Perhaps you'll be able to fix it up so the fellows won't make a criminal charge against you, but of course you realize that your days at Yale are over. You'd better get out as quick as you can. Good night."

The door closed behind him. Boltwood stood looking at it for a long time before he swung sharply on his roommate.

"Philbin," he said, "how did that stuff get into my drawer?"

In a moment the sad-eyed chap stiffened and drew himself up with a touch of indignation. "How do you suppose I know?" he flung back. "I thought you were foolish to let those fellows search. They've got it in for you. I reckon they did just what you said they wouldn't do—planted the stuff on you."

"No, Martin," said Roger quietly, "it was not those fellows who planted the loot on me. They found it in a legitimate manner."

"Good Lord!" cried Philbin. "You don't mean to confess that you've been driven to steal, do you?"

CHAPTER XXXV

IN THE BALANCE

NO matter how lenient Dolliver may have felt toward Boltwood, not one of his companions were of the same mood, and at a remarkably early hour the next day it seemed as if the entire college had become informed of what had happened. The gossips buzzed with it, passing from lip to lip the statement that Roger Boltwood had been caught red-handed, the evidence against him being absolutely overwhelming. Nor did some of the five men constituting the searching party lose any time about making a statement of the matter to the faculty and placing a formal charge against Boltwood.

It happened, however, that the charge could not be investigated until the following day, as the president was ill with a severe cold. Nevertheless, the evidence must have seemed overwhelmingly crushing; for Roger received immediate notice that such a charge had been made against him, and that he was to appear before the faculty at nine o'clock on the following morning. This meant that he was practically under suspension.

Under suspension the day before the great game, with the Crimson team already on hand and primed for the struggle, people beginning to flow into New Haven in a stream which would swell steadily until it became a mighty human flood. Under suspension, with the evidence black and damning against him, and the prospect such that even his friends, though they remained loyal, were worried. Was it possible, after the struggle he had made, that fate was going to hand him a finishing blow just when every prospect had smiled the fairest?

It must not be supposed that Roger was so dense that he failed to suspect Philbin. The suspicion had overwhelmed and sickened him. He had refrained, because of this very sensation of soul sickness, to make anything like an immediate effort to wrest the truth from Martin.

Through the long hours of the night, while he lay turning the matter over and over in his mind, Roger began to believe that he could see precisely how this terrible thing had come about, and to a certain extent he blamed himself for it. He had been too absorbed in his own affairs and his own ambitions to guard Philbin as the poor fellow needed to be guarded against the degrading influence of Engle and his set. It was Engle, of course, who had stripped the unwary, foolish young man of the little legacy left him by his

aunt. It was Engle, the parasite, the crook, the cold-blooded wretch, who had robbed Martin Philbin and left him so desperate through lack of money that in order to remain in college he himself had resorted to robbery.

The belief that this was the full truth of the matter left Boltwood dejected and sorrowful, seeking vainly for some method by which Philbin could be saved. That Martin would come up and shoulder the guilt in time to absolve Roger the latter never doubted; that is, he did not doubt it at first. Even when—unusual as it was—Philbin rose first in the morning, dressed, and got out without saying a word to his roommate, Boltwood felt assured that he would speak in time. But when the forenoon passed and Philbin failed to return Roger decided to search for him.

He felt it keenly whenever he saw passing students looking at him askance and saying something to each other in subdued tones. He felt it, but he was buoyed up by a knowledge of innocence and a conviction that his innocence would be proven beyond dispute of even the most biased.

There was to be little besides signal practice on this last day at the field. Roger went out, and was quietly told that another man would be worked in the line-up at left guard. No explanation was made, but of course he knew the reason. Fearing that the investigation by the faculty

would end in Boltwood's expulsion from Yale, Brooks and Harney were doing their best to prepare substitutes for the gap in the left wing of the eleven.

"I'll find Philbin waiting when I get back to the rooms," thought Roger. "He's kept away by himself all day, fighting it out. He'll come back and own up like a man."

But when he hastened to his rooms after the work at the field was over, he was disappointed to find no sign of Philbin.

Night came—the night before the great game—and the missing man did not return. At last Roger was reluctantly forced to believe something he had hitherto refused to think possible; he was forced to believe that Philbin had run away like a coward, leaving his roommate to suffer disgrace for a crime he had not committed.

"I didn't think it of him," said Roger bitterly. And there was little rest for him that night.

He awoke from troubled sleep long after daylight, groaned, and looked at his watch. It was nearly eight-thirty, and he would be late for breakfast at the training table. That was the first thought which startled him. Another followed: It was nearly eight-thirty, and at nine o'clock he was to appear before the faculty, charged with theft!

With a bound, he was out of bed, and in a mo-

ment he was splashing icy cold water over his face and head.

"And I should be playing for Yale to-day!" he muttered in savage resentment at everything. "Doris Keating will be there to witness the game. I heard a week ago that she was coming. Dowling will play. I'll be out of it—branded a thief! Oh, Martin, I didn't think it of you!"

He did not stop to shave, for there were no minutes to spare, and in short order he was dressed.

As he was leaving, chancing to think of his letter to the bank, though he scarcely expected a reply, he rushed over to the college post office and looked in his mail box. There were two letters in it, both addressed to him.

The first was from the Northern Manhattan National Bank of New York. He ripped it open before glancing at the second letter. It was not a reply to his letter to the bank, written yesterday, but contained instead a notification that he had overdrawn his account to the extent of twenty-seven dollars and fifty-nine cents. A prompt deposit to cover this amount was requested.

"What the deuce does this mean?" he cried. "Everything's wrong! Everything's against me! I don't understand—"

He stopped short, staring at the handwriting

on the envelope of the second letter. It resembled his own penmanship in a way, but now he knew it was that of Martin Philbin, who had practiced so faithfully to imitate his "rugged, characteristic chirography."

"Jove!" he breathed. "Can it be possible? Can it be that Phil forged checks against my account?"

His hands shook as he ripped the letter open. It contained several sheets, upon which the same handwriting was in evidence.

"My dearest friend," he read eagerly, "I am addressing you as friend for the last time. When you have read this letter through to the end you will be my friend no longer. You will never know how highly I esteem you, nor how fine to me has been our association. I won't attempt to make you understand, for mere words are not sufficient. I'm going to come directly to the point by writing a full and complete confession of the shameful, humiliating truth—a confession which should save you from suffering the shame of shouldering a crime of which you are absolutely innocent.

"How can I do it! Yet I must. You will despise and hate me when you know that I have forged your name to checks and obtained money upon them. I did this several times, until I dared do so no more, for fear that the account would be overdrawn. The first hundred dollars I obtained in this manner I expected to pay back immediately. I had what I believed was a sure tip on a certain stock which I purchased on a close margin. Instead of going up, the price of the stock slumped suddenly, and I lost. I was in it then, and I had to win somehow, so I drew more of your money, and tried again. In this way I lost it all.

"Had I listened to you in the first place, I might have saved some of my legacy from the claws of Carter Engle. He

didn't get it all; much of it went into stock gambling. Engle trimmed me of a few hundred. When he thought I was done he gave me the frosty shoulder. I came back later with a bluff that I had more money, and he was willing to take me up again. That gave me a chance to get into the Oval without any one questioning my right to be there. I was there, of course, to visit my friend Engle.

"Roger, old man, I hope you'll never know what it is to be so desperate for the need of money that you'll feel willing to steal. I simply had to get money somehow in order to live, and the condition was such that I couldn't earn enough by work of any sort. I became a sneak thief, a burglar, as well as a forger. It was I who looted the rooms in the Oval.

"On the night that Dolliver and Enroad caught me in their rooms I was wearing tied over my face a handkerchief belonging to you—a handkerchief which I had taken by accident instead of one of my own. When I broke away from those fellows I ran with the fear and horror of exposure clutching at my neck, and seeming to still the beatings of my heart. I'm sure, after getting back to our room, that I didn't hide the stuff in your drawer of the dresser with the deliberate and malicious design of throwing the crime upon you in case of pursuit and search. I simply got it stowed away somewhere, and piled into bed. Of course I knew when Dolliver and the others knocked at the door.

"This is all there is for me to say, Roger, old man. You can take this letter to the faculty and prove your innocence. I've left New Haven for good. I didn't stop for anything save the clothes I had on and what chanced to be in my pockets. I'm an outcast henceforth, sullied by the ineradicable touch of crime. Some day—if God lets me live—I'll pay you back every dollar I squandered belonging to you. Some day I shall try to make restitution to the fellows whose stuff I stole and pawned. This is all I can do.

"One final word of confession: I don't know how much of my weakness and misfortune I owe to heredity. I don't even know who my parents were. That stuff about my father being

a minister and my mother an invalid was all a figment of my imagination. I've always felt sore because I had no parents, and when other boys used to taunt me at school about being a poorhouse kid I formed the design of telling—some time when I should go away where no one knew the truth—about my highly respectable parents. I couldn't claim at college that I was wealthy. My first year would have branded such a story as fictitious.

"I was adopted by a kind widow with whom I lived, and who loved me, I believe, almost as much as if I had been her own son. When she died last July she left me a share of her small fortune, which was divided among some other heirs. This was the legacy of my mythical aunt. I chose to speak of her as my aunt. That's all, Roger. Now you know what a common dog Martin Philbin really is. Martin Philbin! Why, even that isn't my name—my real name. Philbin was the name of the widow who adopted me. I've disgraced it, and now I must take a new name and begin life anew. Repentantly yours,

MARTIN."

Roger, his face drawn and colorless, took out his watch and looked at it. "I've got just about time enough to place this in the hands of the faculty at nine o'clock," he said. "Poor Martin! I wish I could shield him, but a man must consider his own honor and future."

CHAPTER XXXVI

FULL MEASURE

ROGER BOLTWOOD played left guard in the great game with Harvard. Three times in the third quarter, when the Crimson was hurling its smashing attack against the left wing of the Blue, Boltwood was stretched on the ground, battered, trampled, seemingly senseless, for a few seconds. Each time he recovered amazingly, and begged not to be put out of the game. He lasted the quarter through, and, like Andy Dowling, did all that a human being could do to check the terrible rush line of the enemy.

In the last few minutes of that quarter the Yale players stood like rooted oaks, with their heels almost touching their goal line. Had Harvard made a touchdown then and kicked a goal, she would have led Yale by ten points, which, it finally developed, would have given her the contest.

At the sound of the referee's whistle the battered Yale warriors gasped with relief, some of them seeming ready to drop from the sudden re-

laxation. But Harvard had been held. The cheer of the Cambridge cohorts suddenly died away. From the opposite side of the field rose a tremendous Yale yell. The blue flags fluttered furiously, and the cheer captains, throwing aside the megaphones through which they had bellowed their orders, beat out the slogan with their flailing arms. A mighty cheer it was, a cheer ending with the name of Dowling thrice thundered across the trampled arena.

"Hear that, Andy!" cried Roger, with a grin, his hand falling on Dowling's shoulder as the teams were changing positions. "They know it was your backbone that held us safe when Johnny Harvard—"

"Oh, rot!" exploded Dowling, grinning back at Roger. "You're a good one to talk that way! Why, they kept pounding at you as if they meant to obliterate you. Had you down three times, but you wouldn't stay down, you hog for punishment. You kept coming back for more. Hark! Listen to that! There's something for you to hear!"

The crowd was cheering again, and this time it was the name of Boltwood which was thundered forth.

But there was another quarter to be fought out, another period, during which Yale must not only hold her own, but must score again to win. The

New Haven students, having cheered the two especial heroes of the moment, were now drowned by the thunderous roaring of the Harvard crowd for its entire team.

What happened to restore Yale's aggressiveness it is difficult to say. But something happened in the brief time of changing from one end of the field to the other. Perhaps it was the Yale spirit that suddenly leaped into life and inspired them to fight like tigers, to astonish the Harvard crowd that had fancied them pounded to a standstill. Perhaps it was the Yale spirit that finally enabled them—through the swiftness of Dowling, who got the ball following a Harvard fumble, and the magnificent blocking of Boltwood, who prevented Dowling from being tackled—to secure the needed touchdown. After the goal was kicked, giving Yale a small four-point lead, it surely was, in a great measure, the wonderful defensive work of Dowling and Boltwood that held Harvard till the game ended.

Then followed the usual wild jubilation. The Yale men poured on to the field and captured their heroes. But it was not Brooks alone who was lifted and borne on the sturdy shoulders beneath the crossbar over which the wildly shrieking mob was hurling hats and caps. Both Boltwood and Dowling shared that honor, though protesting against it.

Roger escaped at last. The crowd was still roaring on the field, drowning the sound of the clashing band, as Boltwood made a break for the locker house. He nearly ran down a man, who seized him, despite his efforts to dodge, and brought him up short. Then, begrimed, dirt-covered, perspiring, he gasped and brushed the hair out of his eyes, finding himself face to face with a blushing girl—at the man's side—who was holding out both her gloved hands to him.

"You must be as blind as a bat, Roger," cried Cyrus Keating. "Either that or you're in a perfect panic. We're looking for Tom; that is, I'm looking for him; but I think Doris was sort of looking for somebody else."

"Oh, it was magnificent, Mr. Boltwood!" cried the excited girl. "I never saw anything like it in all my life. I thought they'd killed you once or twice, and every time you got up and kept right on playing. Everybody said it was the most amazing exhibition of grit they ever—"

"I'm delighted to see you, Miss Keating," Roger broke in, pressing both her hands. "I heard you were going to be here, and I—"

"There you are—there you are!" boomed a voice that made Roger start and look over his shoulder in astonishment.

A solid, square-jawed man, with a cigar set between his teeth, was striding straight toward

Roger. It was Henry Boltwood. He bowed stiffly to Keating, then seized his son in his arms.

"Oh, my boy," he cried, "you've made me proud of you to-day! You haven't known it, perhaps, but I've been keeping watch of you, and you made me wonder before this day came. Say, son, I want to talk with you. I want to see you just as soon as I can after you get through with the usual celebrating and speechifying which I know you'll have to stand for. I think we can come to an understanding, for I'm sure you won't hold a grudge because of my mistake in sizing you up."

"I never held a grudge, dad," replied Roger, with a mist in his eyes.

Roger Boltwood had come back—back into his own!

THE END.

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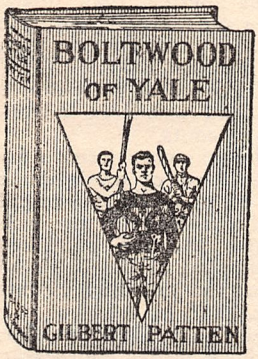

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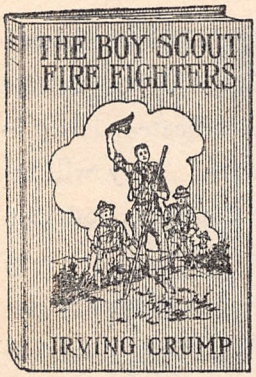

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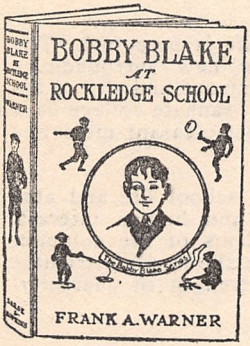

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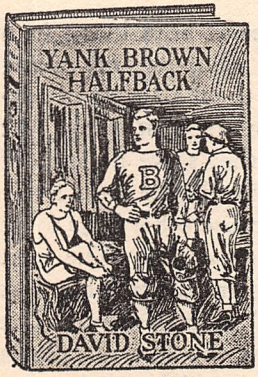

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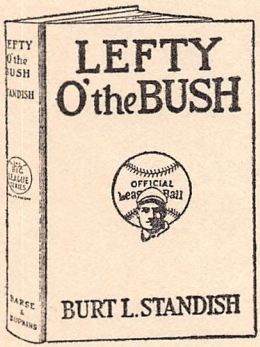

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